



2007 Eisner Award Nominee for Best Ongoing Series

41

THE WALKING DEAD™



CLIFF
Ad 107

KIRKMAN • ADLARD • RATHBURN

IMAGE COMICS PRESENTS

THE WALKING

DEAD

ROBERT KIRKMAN

Creator, Writer

CHARLIE ADLARD

Penciler, Inker, Cover

CLIFF RATHBURN

Gray Tones, Cover Colors

RUS WOOTON

Letterer

Previously:

Dale was bitten by a zombie, but luckily there was time to sever his foot before the bite could kill him. Alice was able to clean and seal off the wound, ensuring Dale doesn't die of blood loss or infection. While healing from his wound, Dale noticed Andrea and Tyreese were growing close to each other. Too close.

For Image Comics



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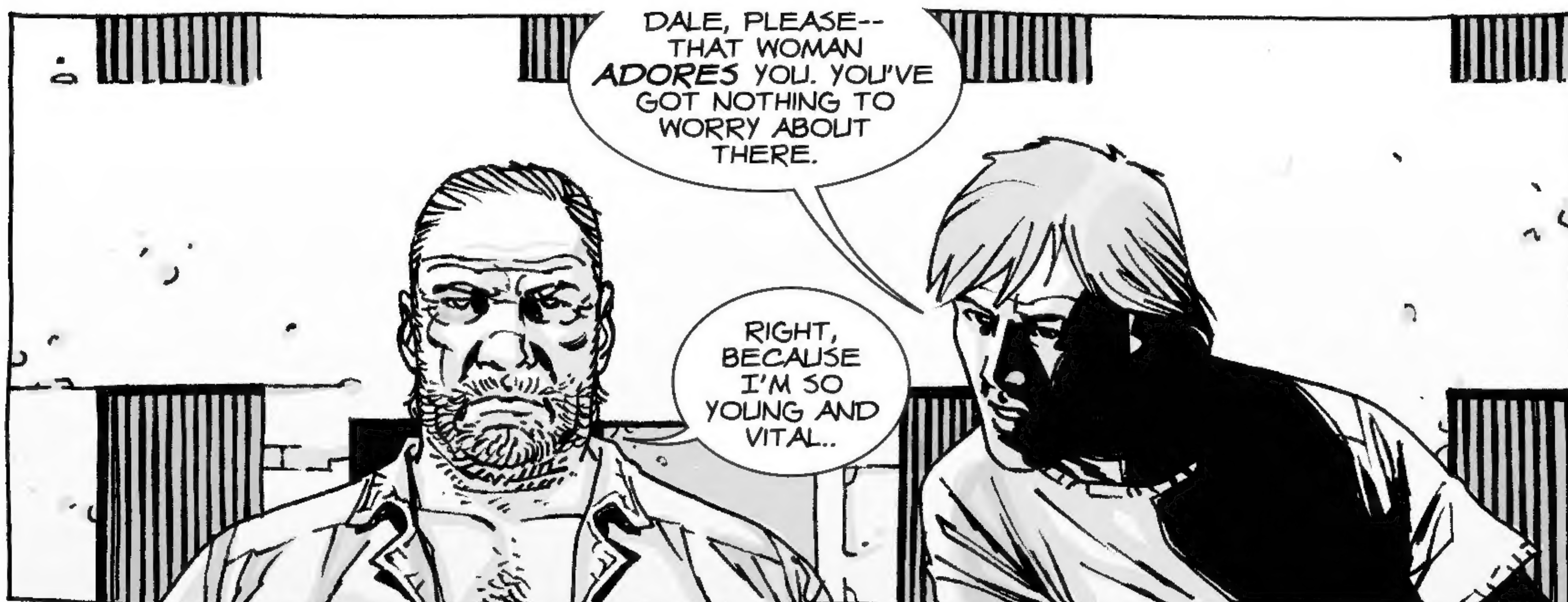
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CARL IS NEXT DOOR PLAYING BY HIMSELF. THAT'S NEW.

I KNOW, HE'S STARTING TO FEEL SAFE HERE, HE'S GETTING MORE INDEPENDENT EVERY DAY. IT'S NICE...

IT'S ALMOST LIKE WE GOT OUR LITTLE BOY BACK.

THAT'S SO GOOD TO HEAR.

IT'S TAKEN A WHILE... BUT IT SEEMS LIKE WE'RE FINALLY SETTLING IN.

I HAD BREAKFAST AND LUNCH WITH CAROL TODAY. WE TALKED LIKE WE USED TO.

IT WAS NICE.

IT'S PROBABLY BEST TO FORGET THE WEIRDNESS WITH HER. WE GOTTA KEEP REMINDING OURSELVES THERE'S NO RULES OUT HERE.

THE WAY PEOPLE REACT TO THINGS--THEIR BEHAVIOR, IT'S GOING TO BE DAMN ERRATIC, AND WHO CAN BLAME THEM?

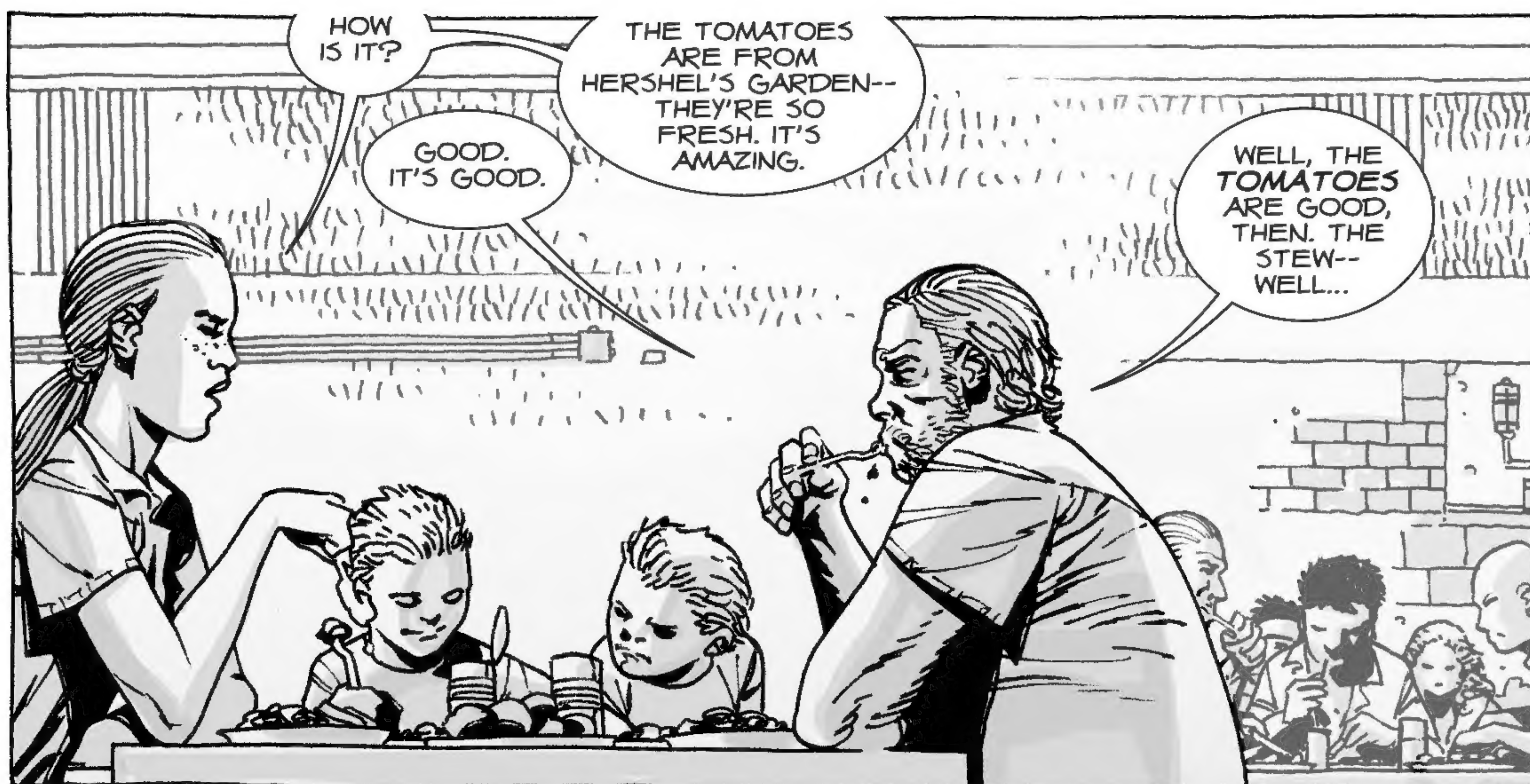
WHAT SHE DID TO HERSELF--HER ADVANCES ON US, AS UNCOMFORTABLE AS IT MAKES US--MAYBE WE SHOULD JUST FORGET IT.

THERE'S NO GUIDELINES FOR BEHAVIOR IN THIS SITUATION--EVERYTHING IS UNKNOWN.

HOW'S OUR GIRL BEEN TODAY?

OH, I DON'T KNOW... PERFECT.

IF CARL HAD BEEN THIS WAY AS A BABY--WE PROBABLY WOULD HAVE HAD A SECOND ONE LONG BEFORE NOW.



HOW IS IT?

GOOD. IT'S GOOD.

THE TOMATOES ARE FROM HERSHEL'S GARDEN-- THEY'RE SO FRESH. IT'S AMAZING.

WELL, THE TOMATOES ARE GOOD, THEN. THE STEW-- WELL...

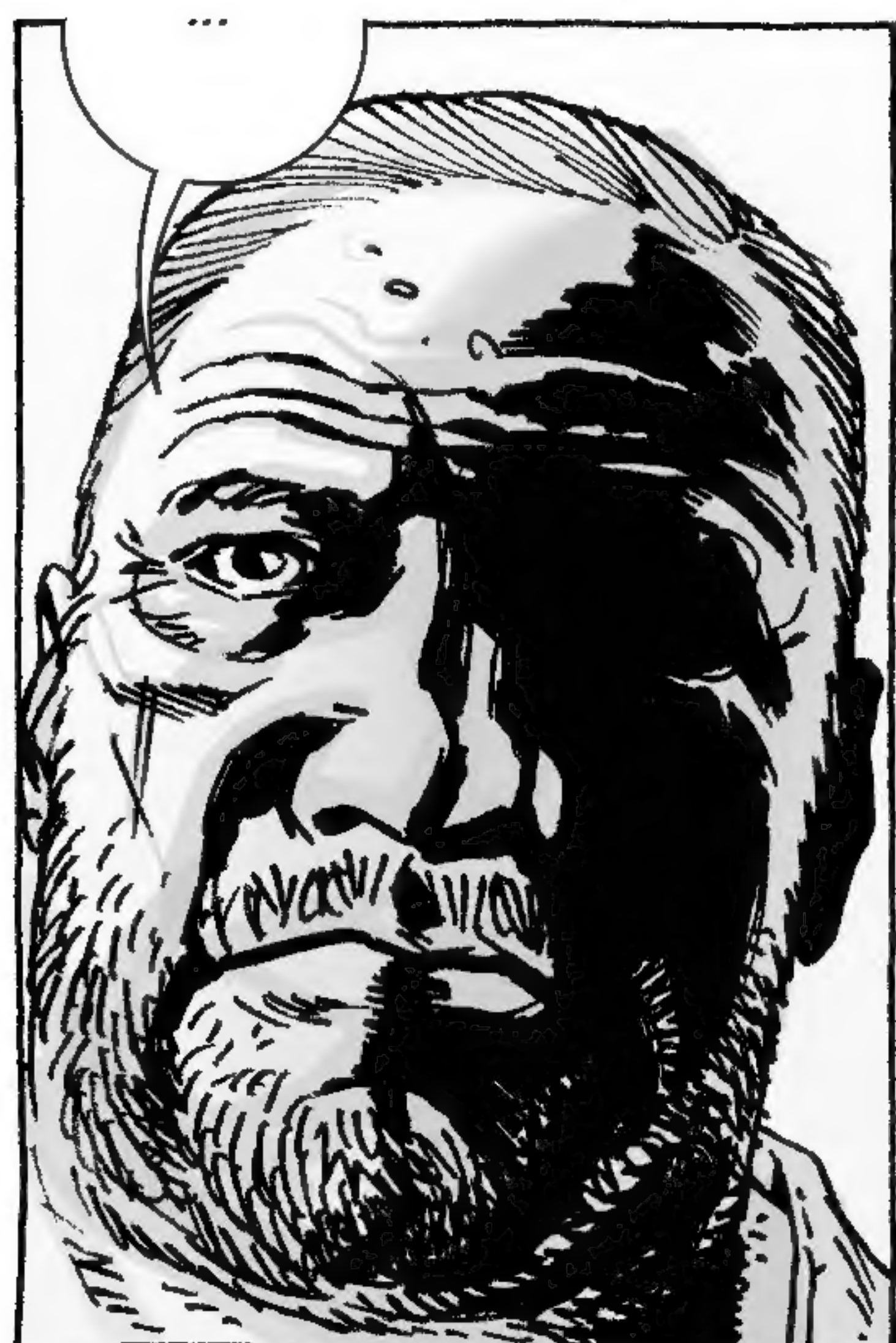
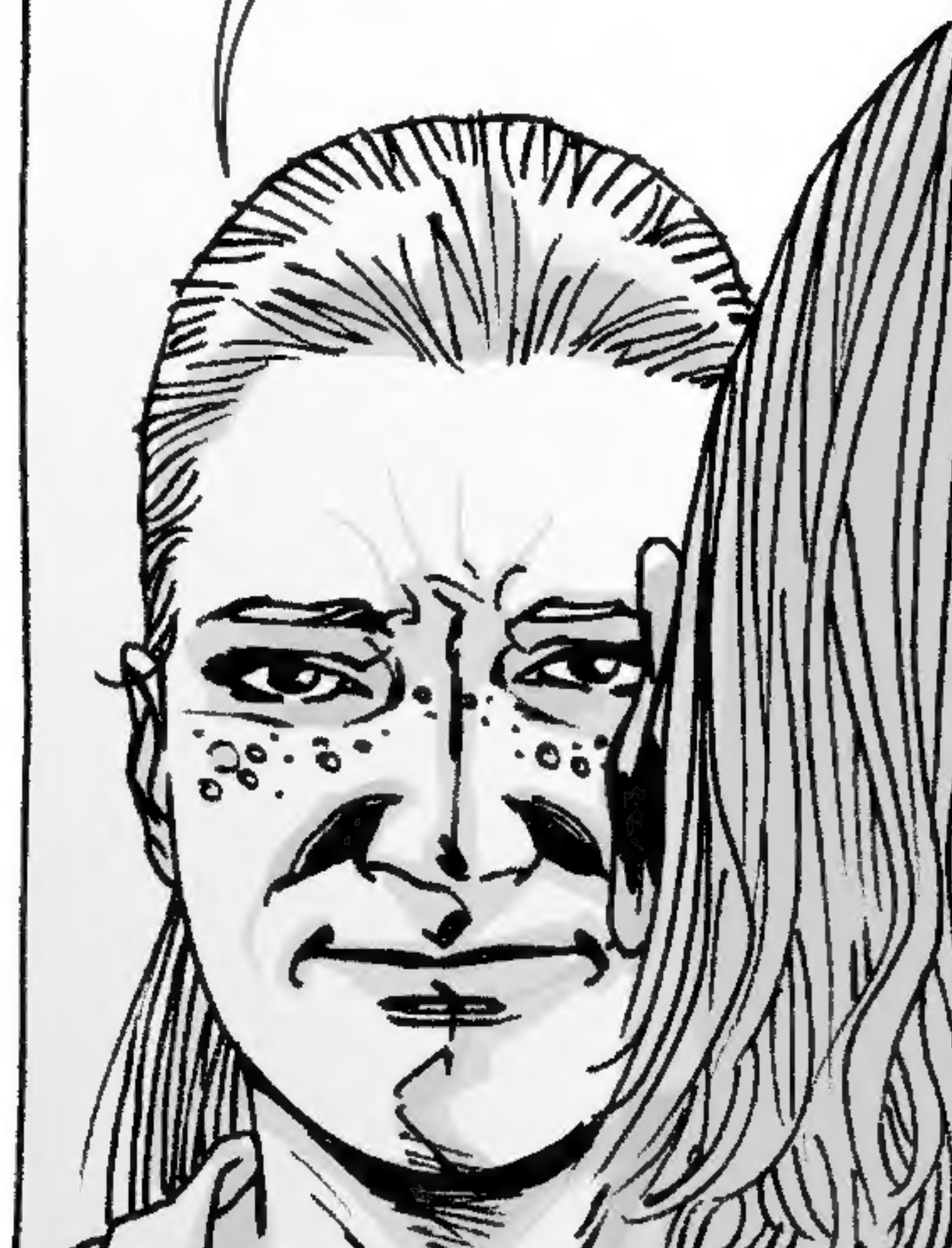
REMEMBER TO IGNORE ANYTHING DALE SAYS, BOYS. EVEN IF HE DOESN'T LIKE THE STEW-- YOU STILL NEED TO EAT IT.



OH, HONEY--YOU MISUNDERSTAND ME. I WASN'T ABLE TO FINISH MY THOUGHT. THE STEW--WELL, IT'S DELICIOUS. MY FAVORITE.



GOOD SAVE, OLD MAN.



ARE YOU OKAY?

SOMETHING THE MATTER?



HUH? NO-- NOTHING. I'M FINE.

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.





YOU KNOW... PEOPLE ARE STARTING TO TALK.

ABOUT US HAVING SEX?

KINDA, BUT NOT EXACTLY. THE CRIB, THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT WHY WE GOT THE CRIB. ANDREA'S PRACTICALLY EXPECTING AN ANNOUNCEMENT.



PEOPLE THINK YOU'RE PREGNANT? ALREADY?



WELL--I COULD BE.



NO YOU COULDN'T BE. I'M CAREFUL.

WHY?

WHY? BECAUSE IT'S TOO DANGEROUS TO BE PLANNING A FAMILY RIGHT NOW. IT'S NOT SAFE.



WE'RE SAFE HERE.

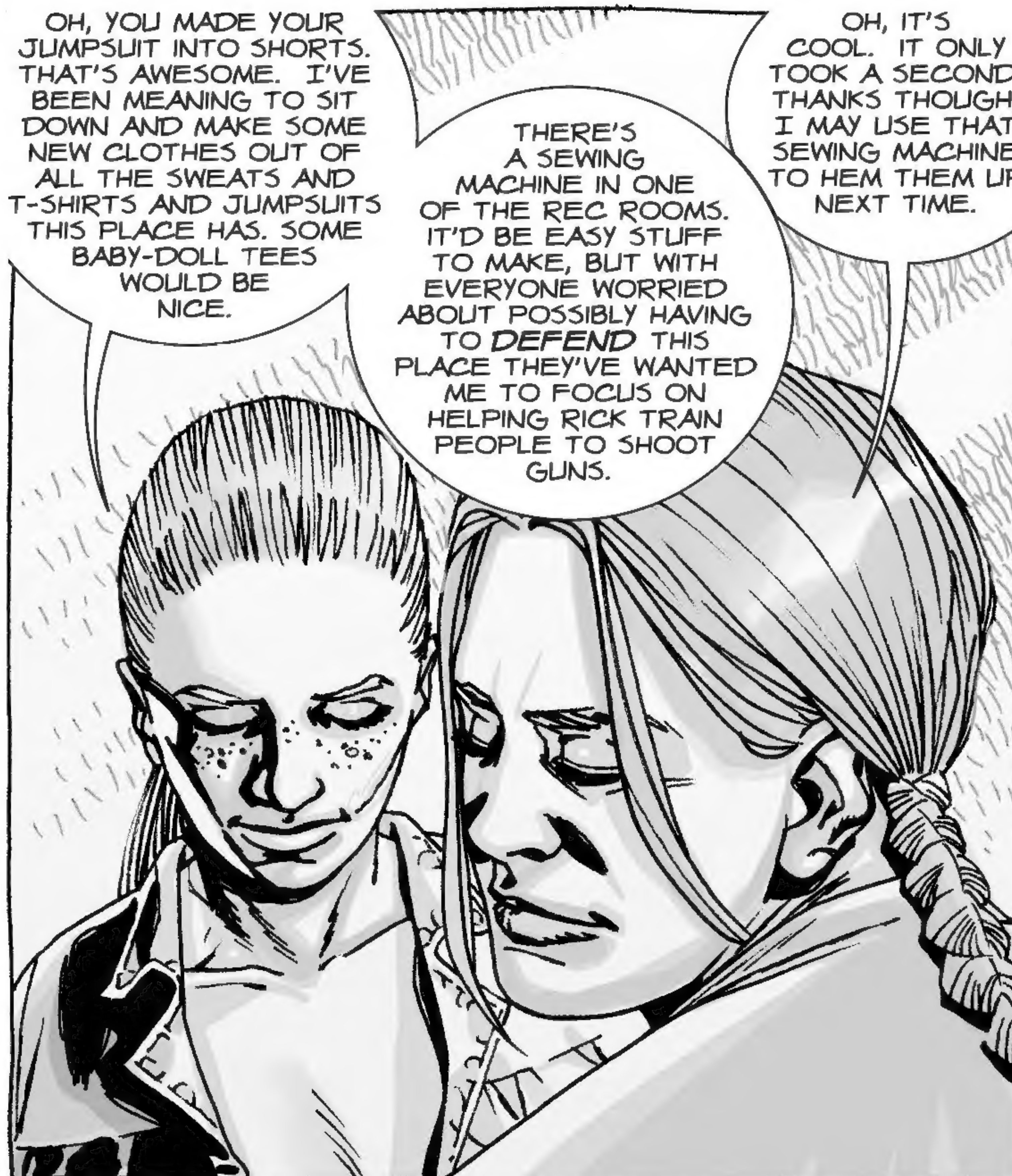
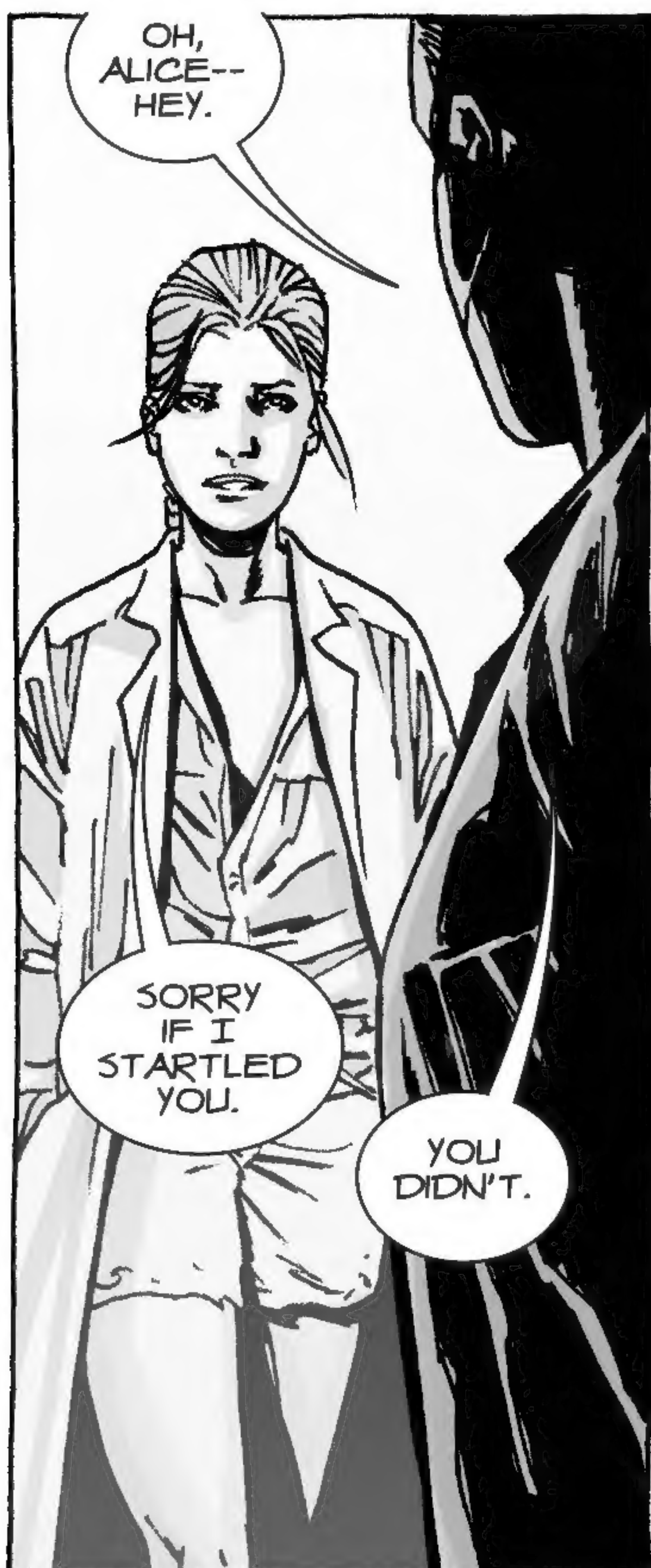
WHAT IF THIS IS THE SAFEST PLACE OUT THERE? WHAT IF THIS IS IT FOR US? SHOULD WE JUST NOT START A FAMILY?



I DON'T KNOW IF I WANT TO DENY MYSELF THAT JUST BECAUSE I'M SCARED. SHOULD WE JUST NEVER HAVE KIDS?



I DON'T KNOW... I JUST DON'T KNOW.

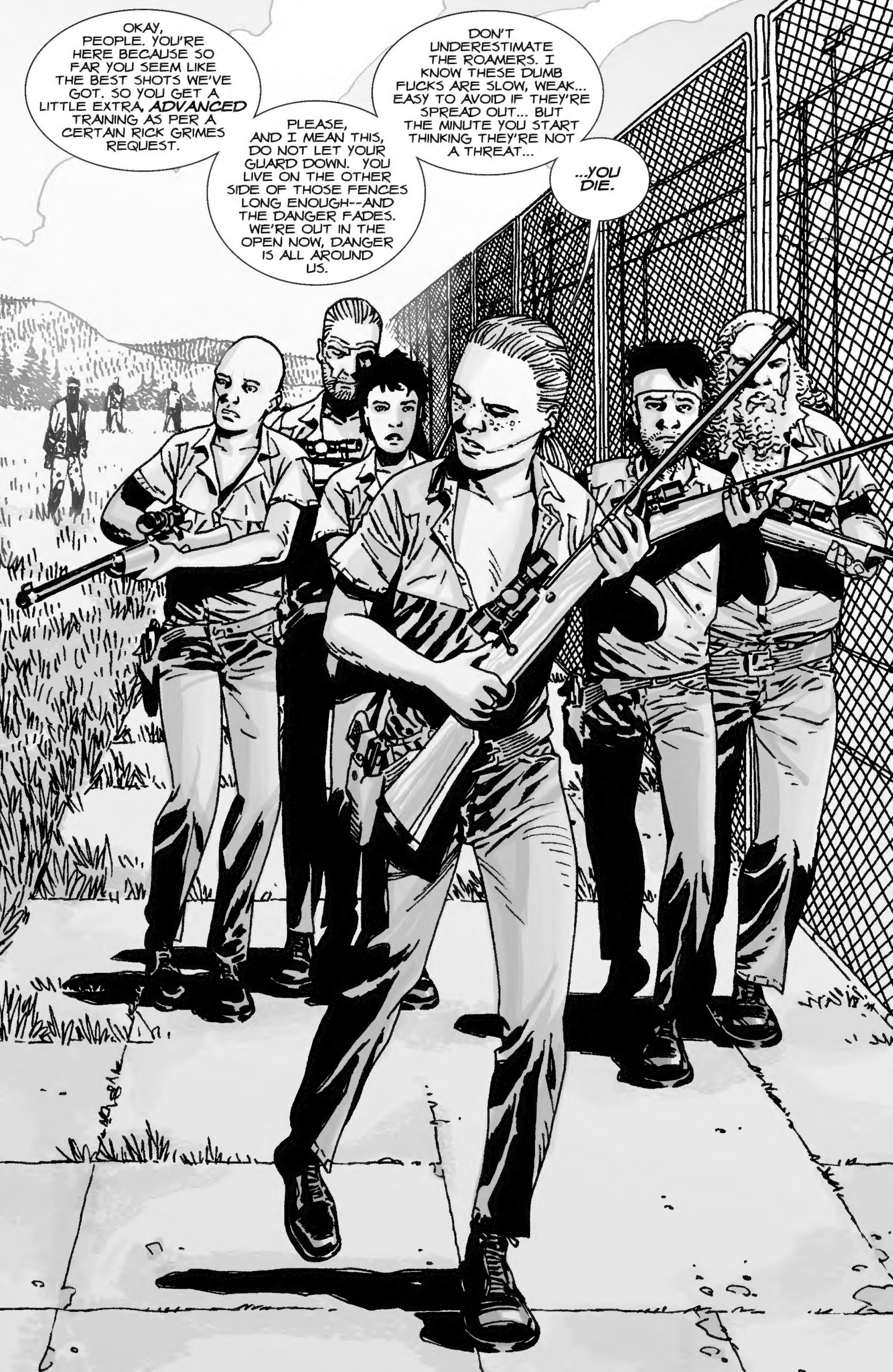


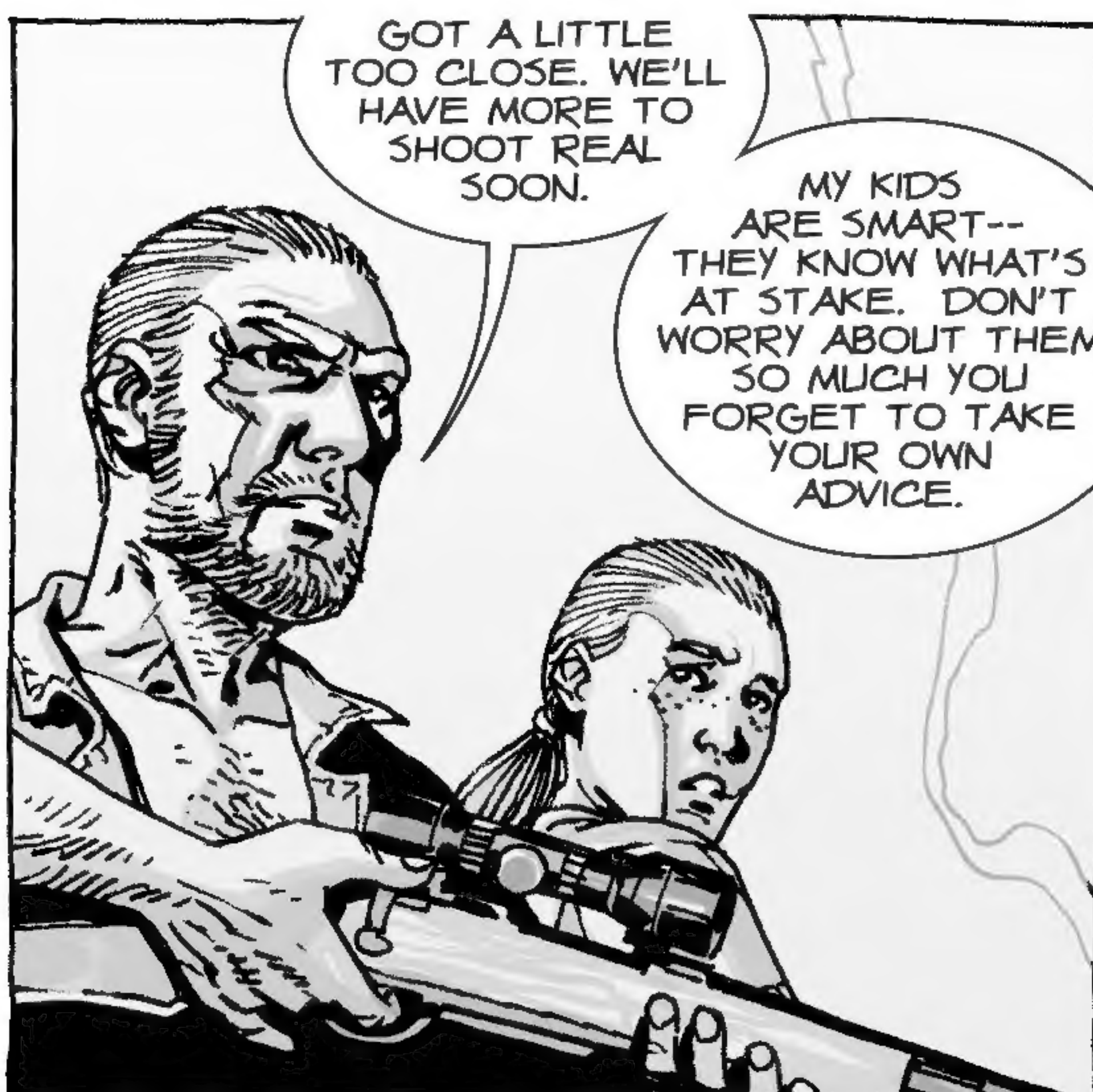
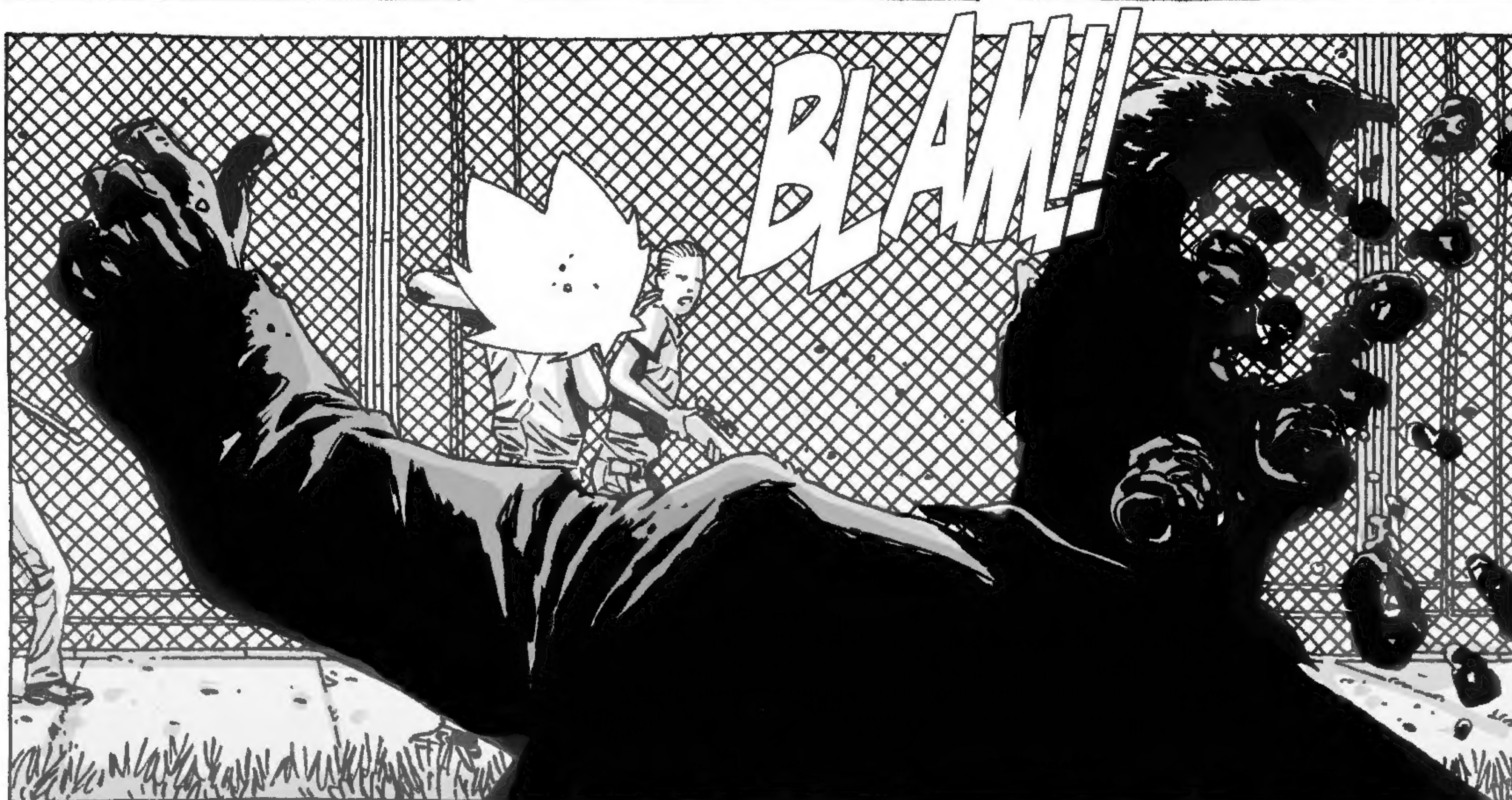
OKAY, PEOPLE. YOU'RE HERE BECAUSE SO FAR YOU SEEM LIKE THE BEST SHOTS WE'VE GOT. SO YOU GET A LITTLE EXTRA, **ADVANCED** TRAINING AS PER A CERTAIN RICK GRIMES REQUEST.

PLEASE, AND I MEAN THIS, DO NOT LET YOUR GUARD DOWN. YOU LIVE ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THOSE FENCES LONG ENOUGH--AND THE DANGER FADES. WE'RE OUT IN THE OPEN NOW, DANGER IS ALL AROUND US.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE THE ROAMERS. I KNOW THESE DUMB FUCKS ARE SLOW, WEAK... EASY TO AVOID IF THEY'RE SPREAD OUT... BUT THE MINUTE YOU START THINKING THEY'RE NOT A THREAT...

...YOU DIE.







NOW, THEY'RE STILL PRETTY SPREAD OUT HERE. THEY HAVEN'T GATHERED AROUND THE FENCES MUCH SINCE WE CLEANED THEM OUT.

SO JUST WATCH THEIR PATTERNS, HOW THEY MOVE. LET'S JUST STUDY THEM FOR A MOMENT, WATCH HOW THEY MOVE.

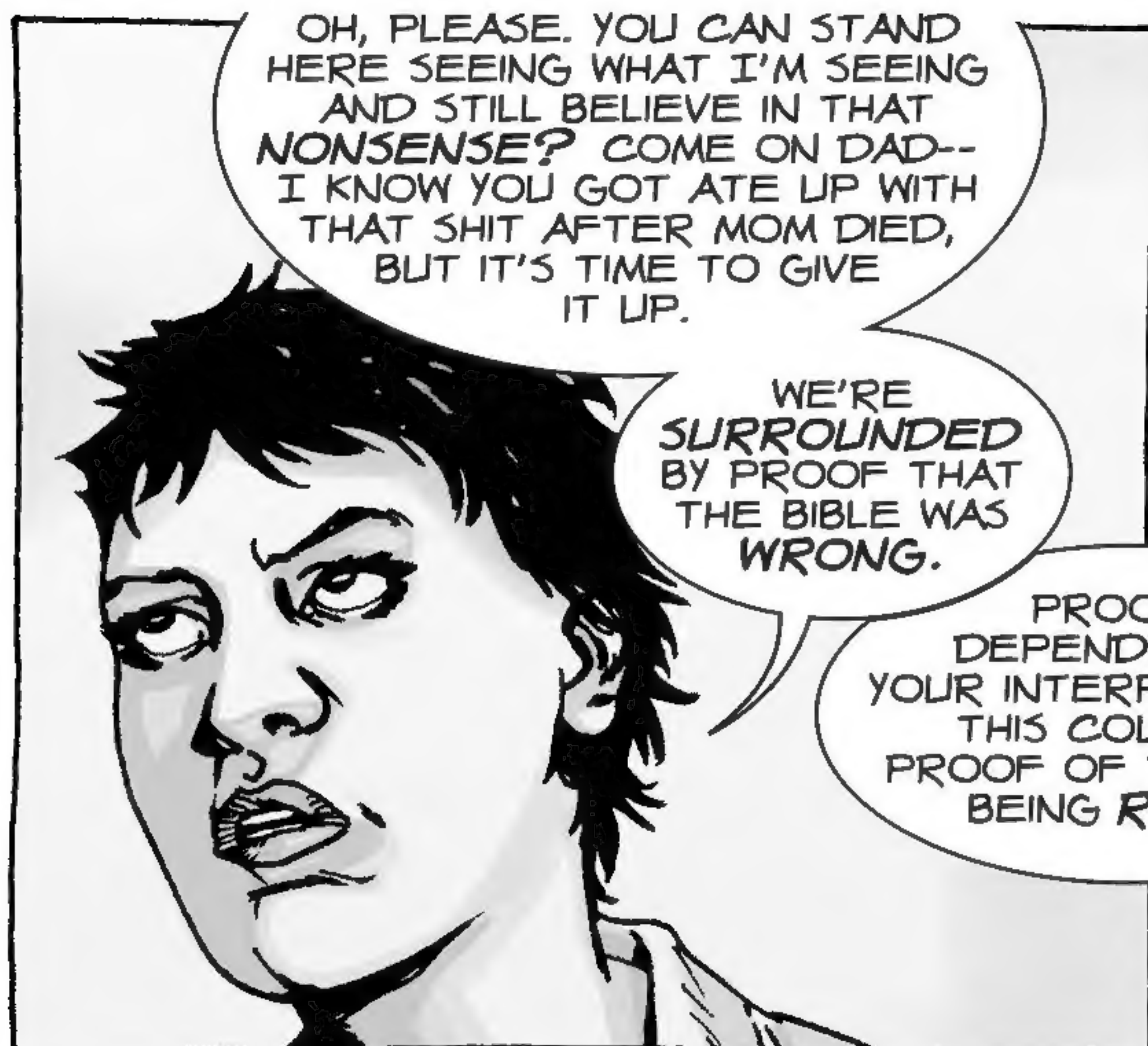
TRY AND GET THE TIMING DOWN.



GODDAMN, THESE THINGS ARE FUCKING CREEPY. IT'S LIKE THEY'RE COMING AT US--AND THEY DON'T EVEN KNOW IT.

FUCK.

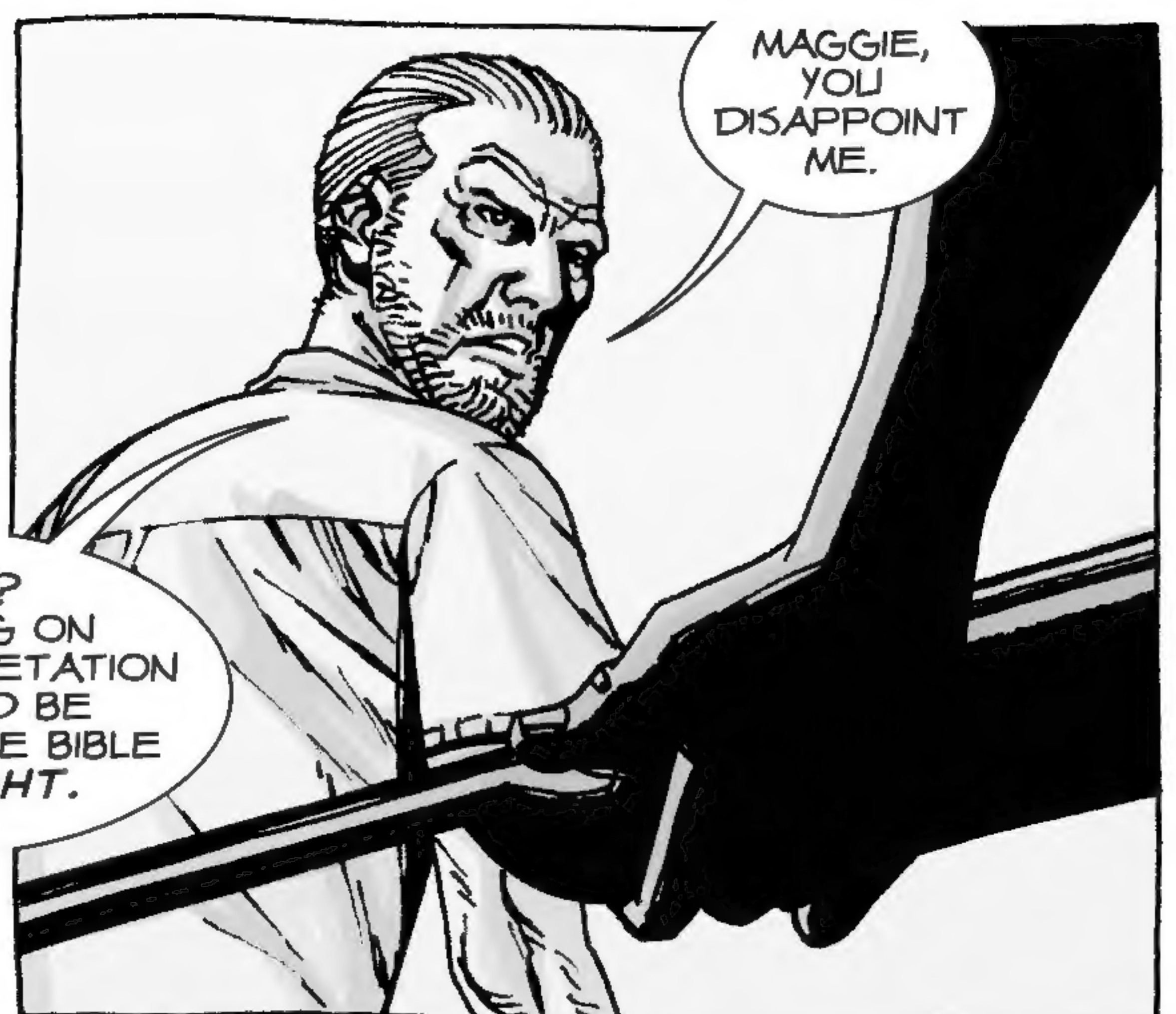
MAGGIE, DARLING. COULD YOU PLEASE KEEP THE POTTY MOUTH A SECRET FROM YOUR DEAR OLD DAD? I'D APPRECIATE IT. AND SAYING THE LORD'S NAME IN VAIN... I THOUGHT I TAUGHT YOU BETTER.



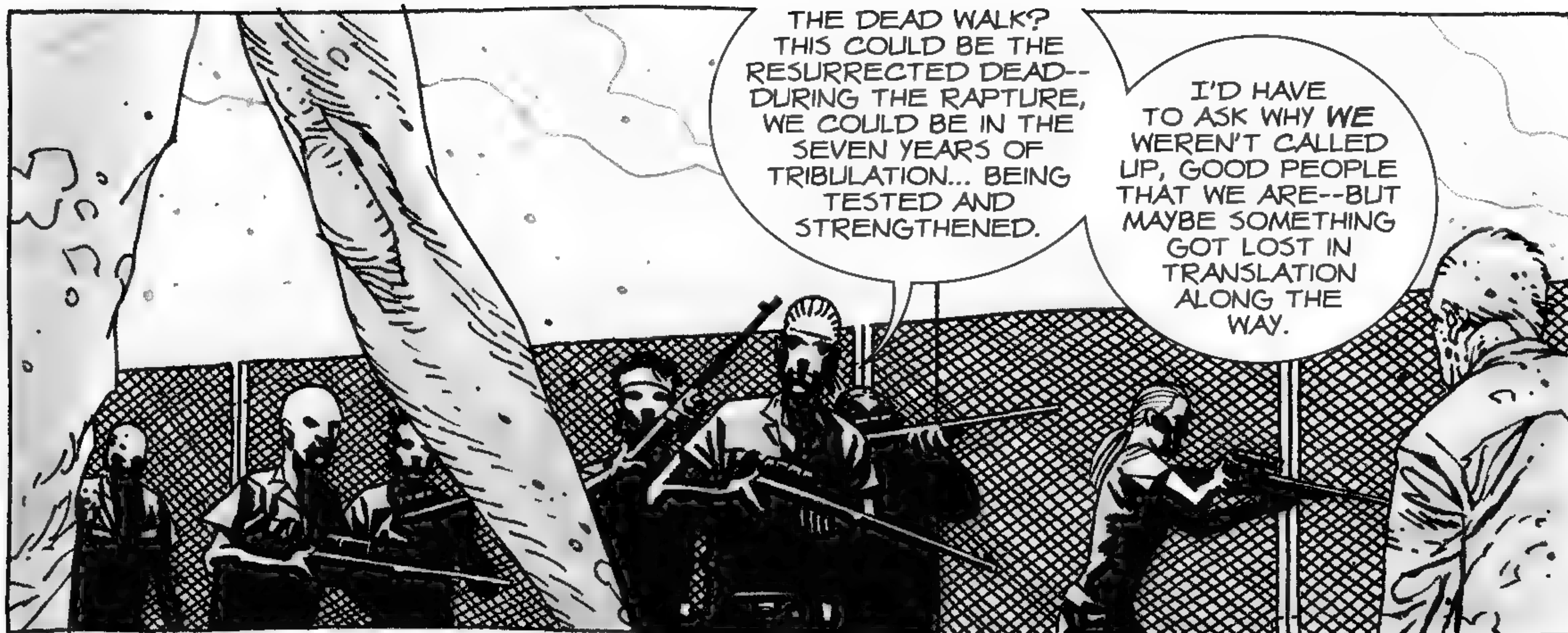
OH, PLEASE. YOU CAN STAND HERE SEEING WHAT I'M SEEING AND STILL BELIEVE IN THAT NONSENSE? COME ON DAD-- I KNOW YOU GOT ATE UP WITH THAT SHIT AFTER MOM DIED, BUT IT'S TIME TO GIVE IT UP.

WE'RE SURROUNDED BY PROOF THAT THE BIBLE WAS WRONG.

PROOF? DEPENDING ON YOUR INTERPRETATION THIS COULD BE PROOF OF THE BIBLE BEING RIGHT.



MAGGIE, YOU DISAPPOINT ME.



THE DEAD WALK?
THIS COULD BE THE
RESURRECTED DEAD--
DURING THE RAPTURE,
WE COULD BE IN THE
SEVEN YEARS OF
TRIBULATION... BEING
TESTED AND
STRENGTHENED.

I'D HAVE
TO ASK WHY WE
WEREN'T CALLED
UP, GOOD PEOPLE
THAT WE ARE--BUT
MAYBE SOMETHING
GOT LOST IN
TRANSLATION
ALONG THE
WAY.



IT'S ALL
ABOUT
FAITH,
HONEY.

MY FAITH
AIN'T NEVER
BEEN
STRONGER.

OH,
BROTHER.



OKAY,
ENOUGH SUNDAY
SCHOOL--LET'S SEE HOW
FAST YOU CAN CLEAR OUT
THE AREA AROUND US.

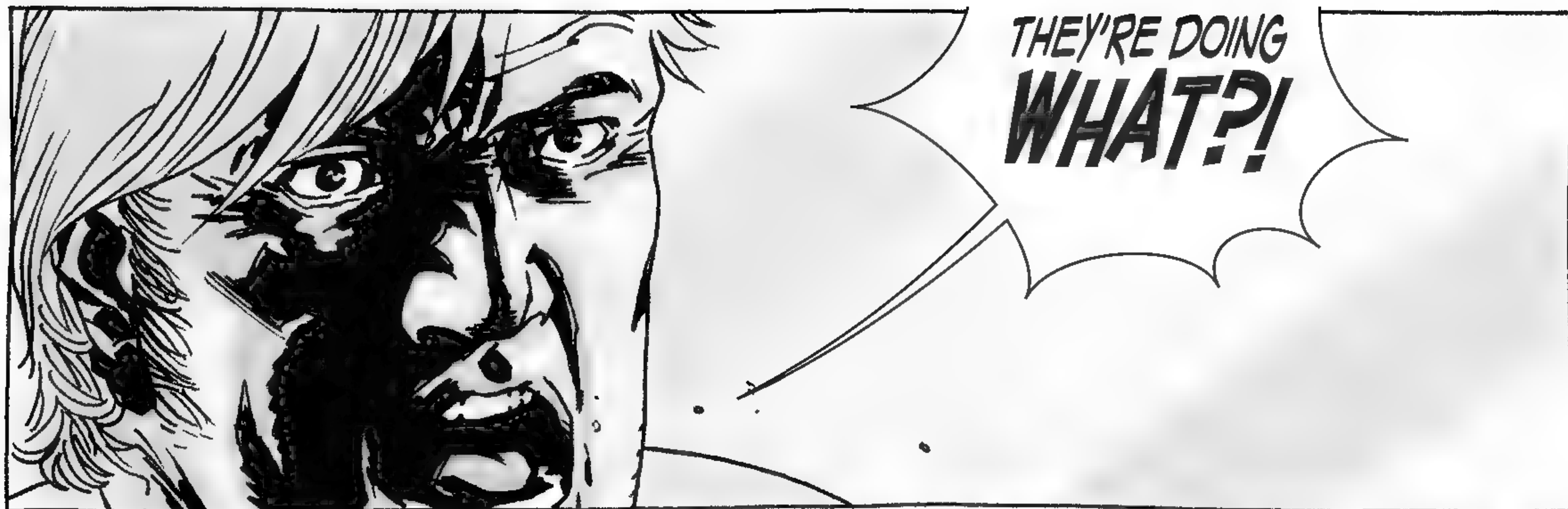


I GOT
DIBS ON
ZOMBIE BARBIE
OVER
THERE.



NO!

DON'T
SHOOT
THAT
ONE.









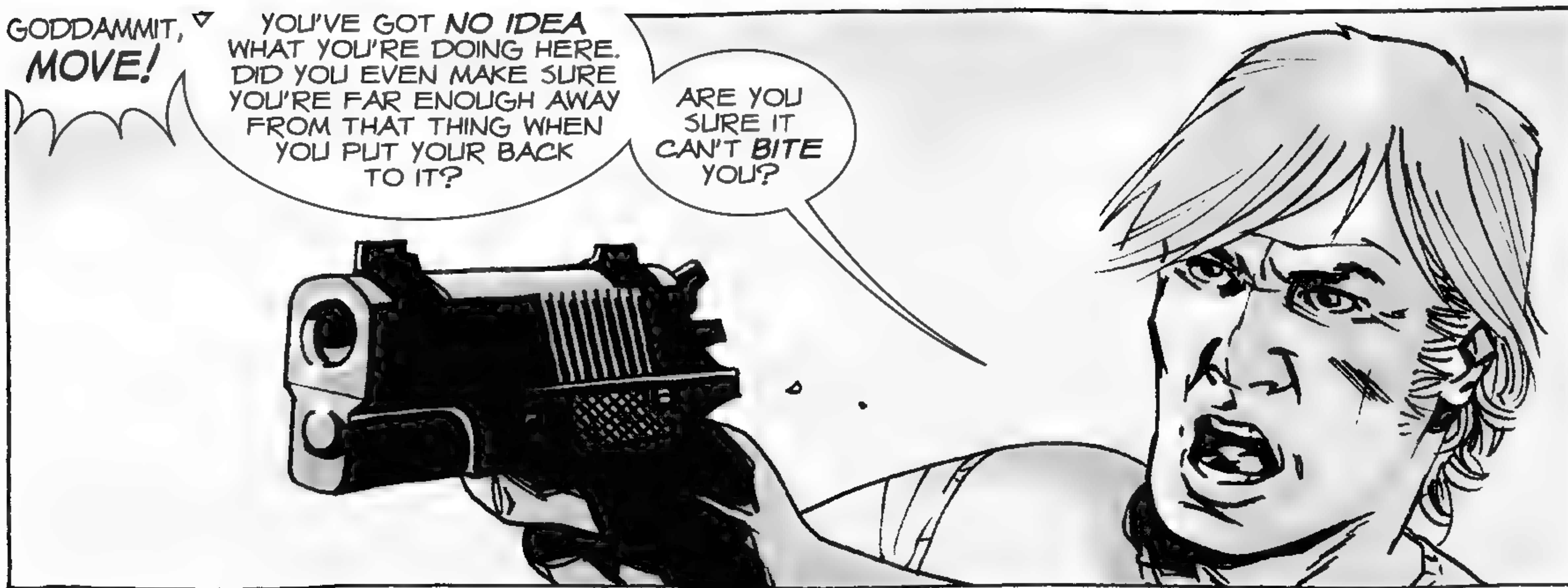
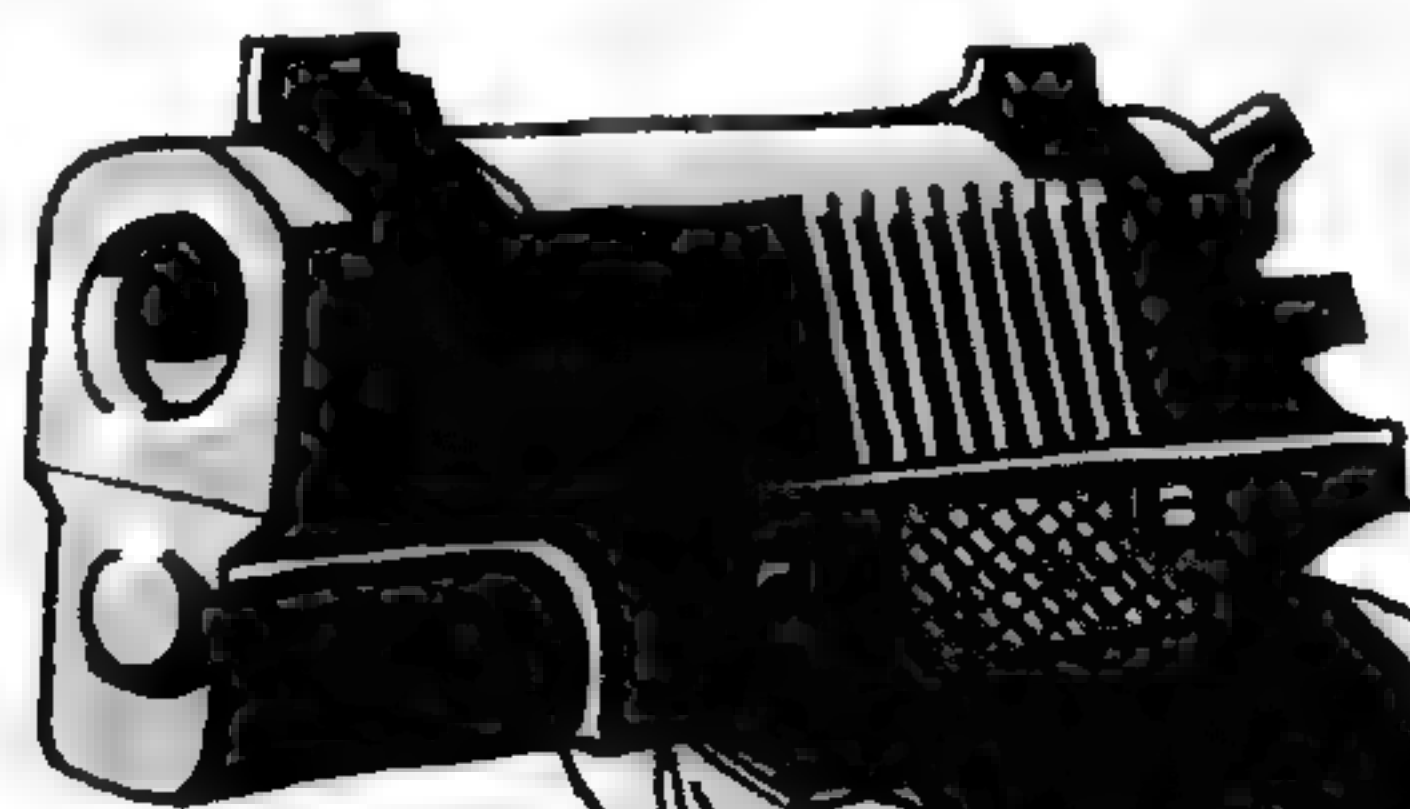
DON'T SHOOT IT! THERE'S SO MUCH WE CAN LEARN.



GODDAMMIT, MOVE!

YOU'VE GOT NO IDEA WHAT YOU'RE DOING HERE. DID YOU EVEN MAKE SURE YOU'RE FAR ENOUGH AWAY FROM THAT THING WHEN YOU PUT YOUR BACK TO IT?

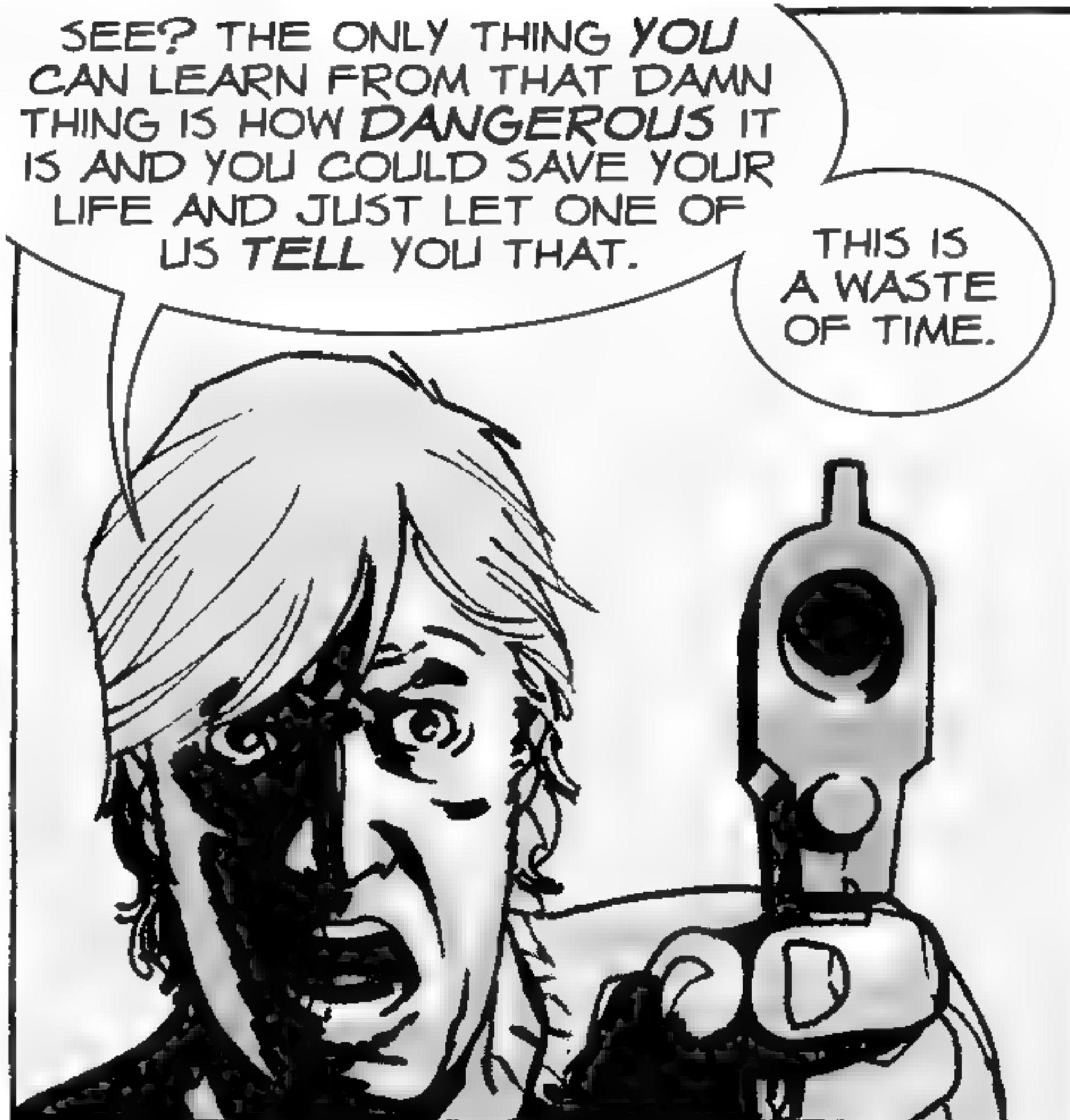
ARE YOU SURE IT CAN'T BITE YOU?

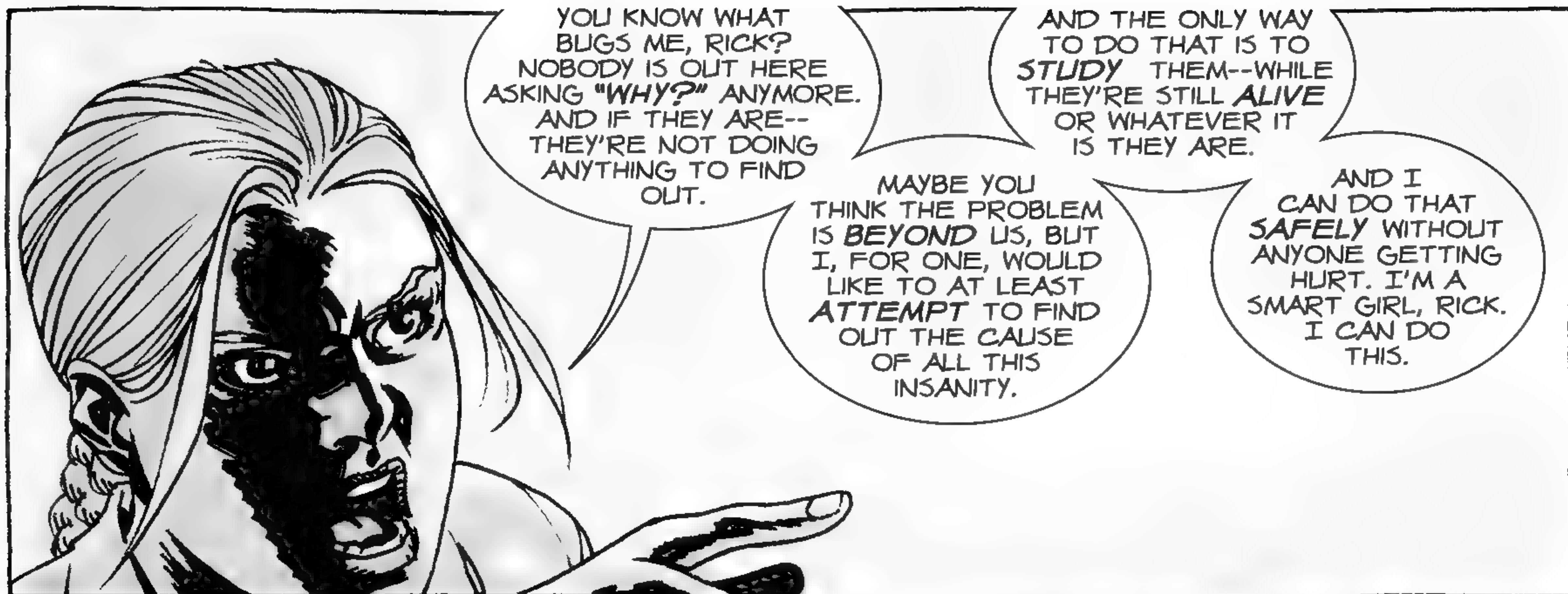


AAGH!

SEE? THE ONLY THING YOU CAN LEARN FROM THAT DAMN THING IS HOW DANGEROUS IT IS AND YOU COULD SAVE YOUR LIFE AND JUST LET ONE OF US TELL YOU THAT.

THIS IS A WASTE OF TIME.



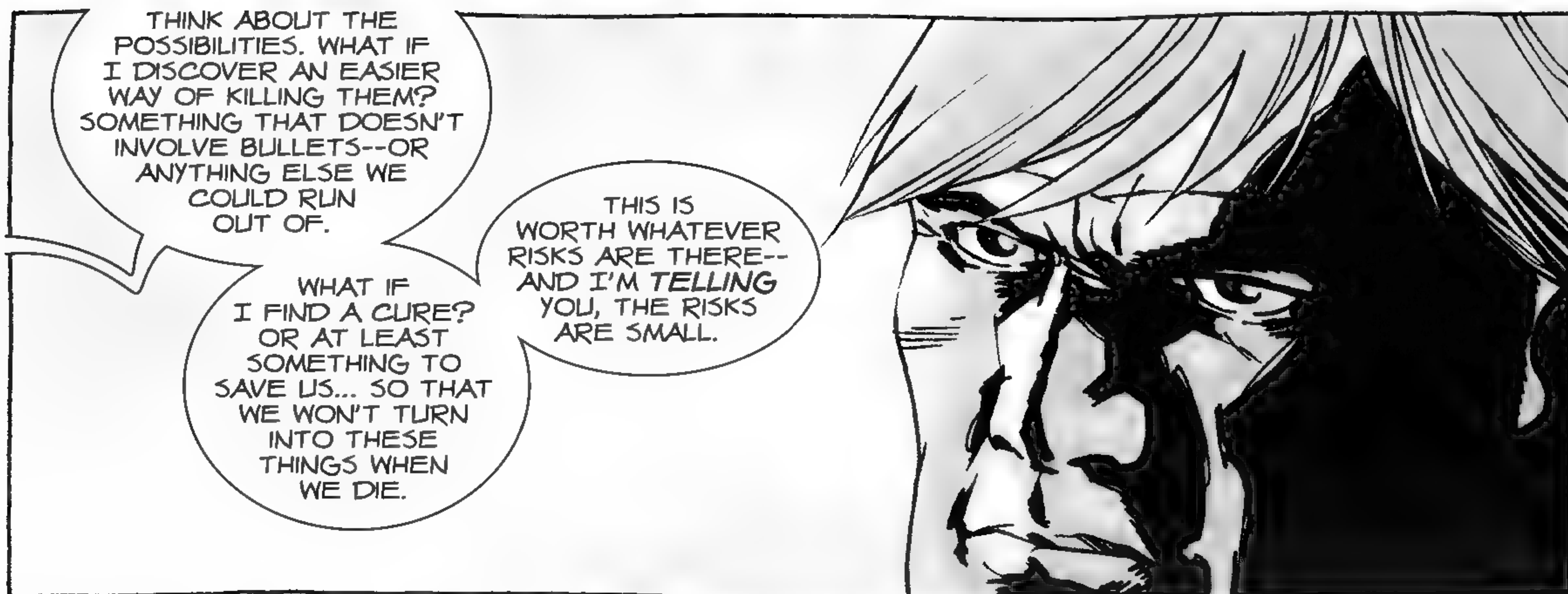


YOU KNOW WHAT BUGS ME, RICK? NOBODY IS OUT HERE ASKING "WHY?" ANYMORE. AND IF THEY ARE-- THEY'RE NOT DOING ANYTHING TO FIND OUT.

AND THE ONLY WAY TO DO THAT IS TO **STUDY** THEM--WHILE THEY'RE STILL **ALIVE** OR WHATEVER IT IS THEY ARE.

MAYBE YOU THINK THE PROBLEM IS **BEYOND** US, BUT I, FOR ONE, WOULD LIKE TO AT LEAST **ATTEMPT** TO FIND OUT THE CAUSE OF ALL THIS INSANITY.

AND I CAN DO THAT **SAFELY** WITHOUT ANYONE GETTING HURT. I'M A SMART GIRL, RICK. I CAN DO THIS.



THINK ABOUT THE POSSIBILITIES. WHAT IF I DISCOVER AN EASIER WAY OF KILLING THEM? SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T INVOLVE BULLETS--OR ANYTHING ELSE WE COULD RUN OUT OF.

WHAT IF I FIND A CURE? OR AT LEAST SOMETHING TO SAVE US... SO THAT WE WON'T TURN INTO THESE THINGS WHEN WE DIE.

THIS IS WORTH WHATEVER RISKS ARE THERE-- AND I'M **TELLING** YOU, THE RISKS ARE SMALL.



DAMN IT, JUST--JUST LET ME DO THIS.



FINE.

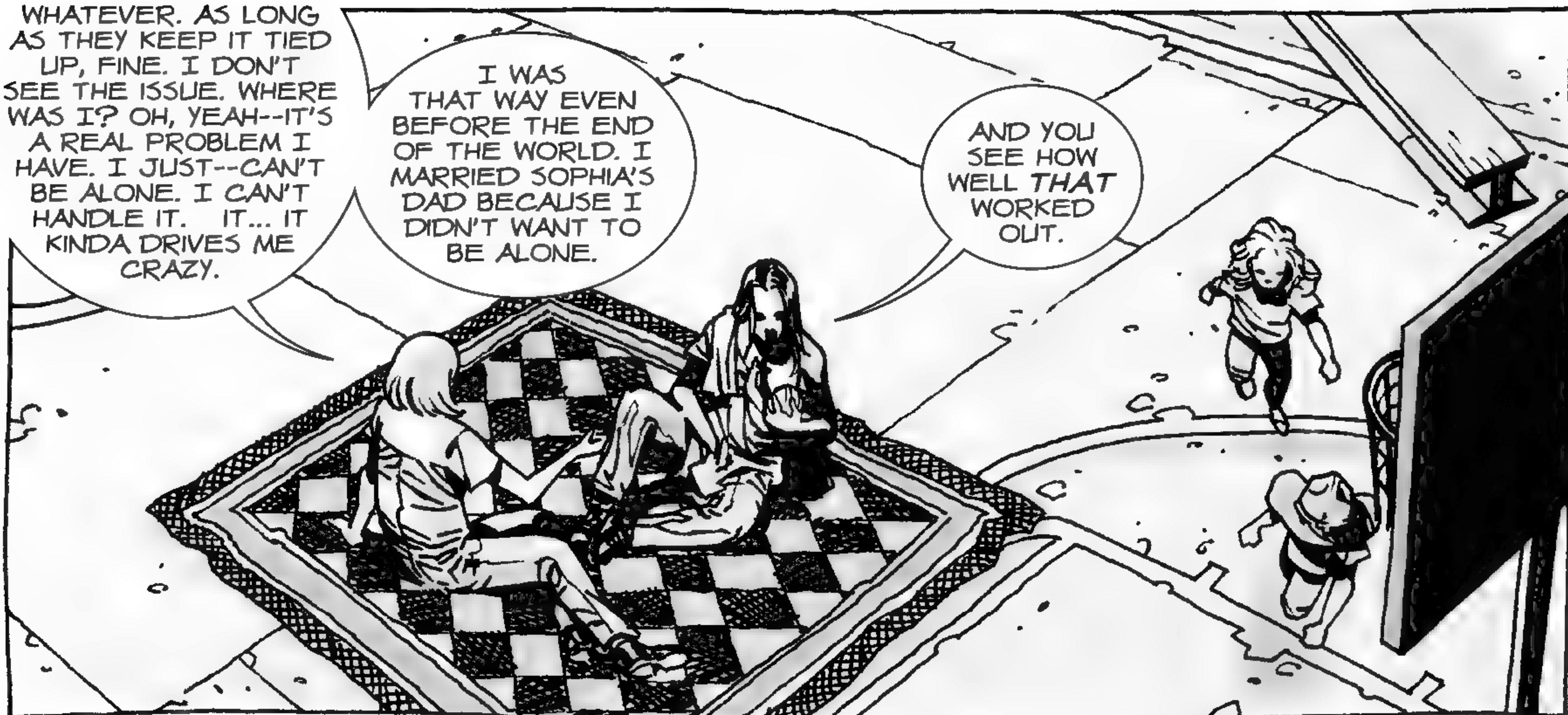
BUT MOVE IT TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE AS SOON AS YOU CAN. IT CAN STAY BETWEEN THE INNER AND MIDDLE FENCES-- THAT'LL MAKE IT SAFER.

AND BE CAREFUL.

WHATEVER. AS LONG AS THEY KEEP IT TIED UP, FINE. I DON'T SEE THE ISSUE. WHERE WAS I? OH, YEAH--IT'S A REAL PROBLEM I HAVE. I JUST--CAN'T BE ALONE. I CAN'T HANDLE IT. IT... IT KINDA DRIVES ME CRAZY.

I WAS THAT WAY EVEN BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD. I MARRIED SOPHIA'S DAD BECAUSE I DIDN'T WANT TO BE ALONE.

AND YOU SEE HOW WELL THAT WORKED OUT.



HE HIT ME SOME... BUT ASIDE FROM THAT HE WAS A GOOD GUY.



YEAH, SOUNDS GREAT. YOU NEED TO JUST BE STRONG, CAROL. YOU DON'T HAVE TO THROW YOURSELF ON THE NEXT GUY TO LOOK YOUR WAY.



WE'RE NOT ALONE--THERE'S A WHOLE OTHER TOWN OF PEOPLE NOT TOO FAR FROM HERE. I'M SURE THERE ARE OTHERS OUT THERE WHO DON'T WANT TO KILL US.

YEAH, I KNOW THEY'VE GOT EVERYONE REALLY WORRIED BUT KNOWING THEY'RE OUT THERE DOES MAKE THINGS... I DON'T KNOW, SEEM A LITTLE LESS BLEAK.



YOU'RE A GREAT PERSON, CAROL. REALLY. I'M SORRY IF I MADE YOU THINK I FEEL OTHERWISE.

YOU'RE A GOOD FRIEND.



YOU'D TAKE CARE OF SOPHIA RIGHT-- IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN TO ME?

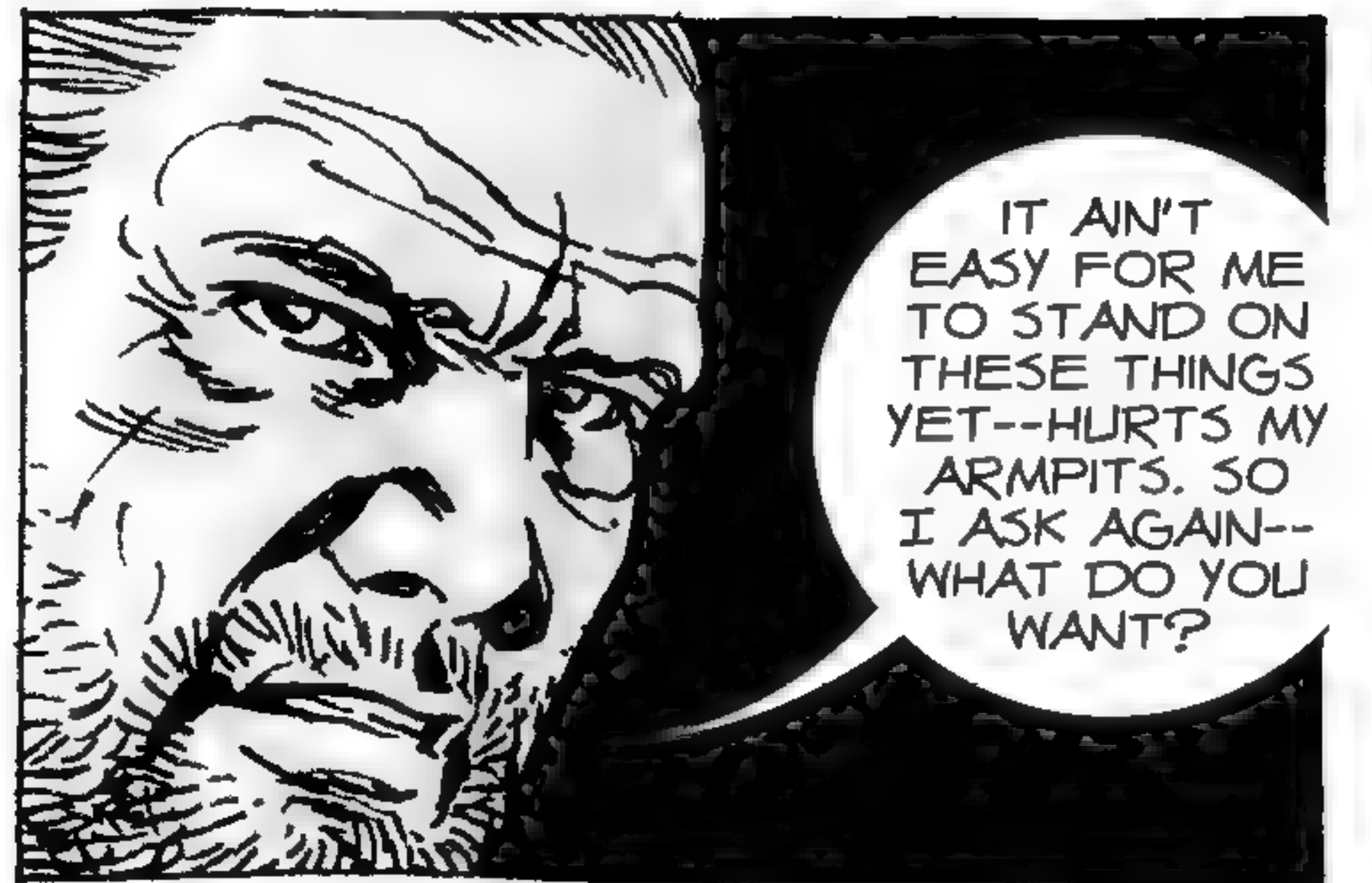
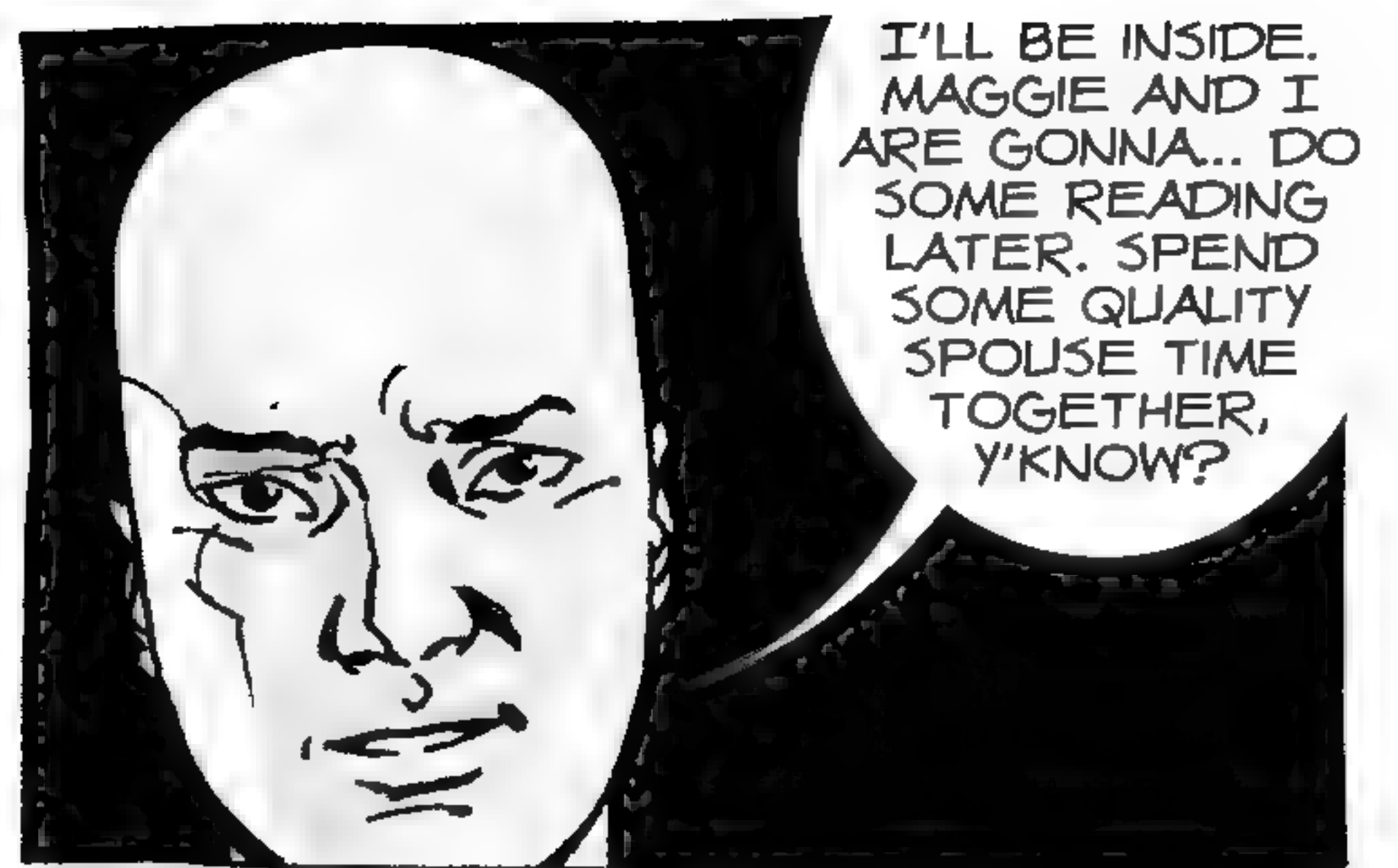


CAROL-- DON'T EVEN THINK THAT WAY.

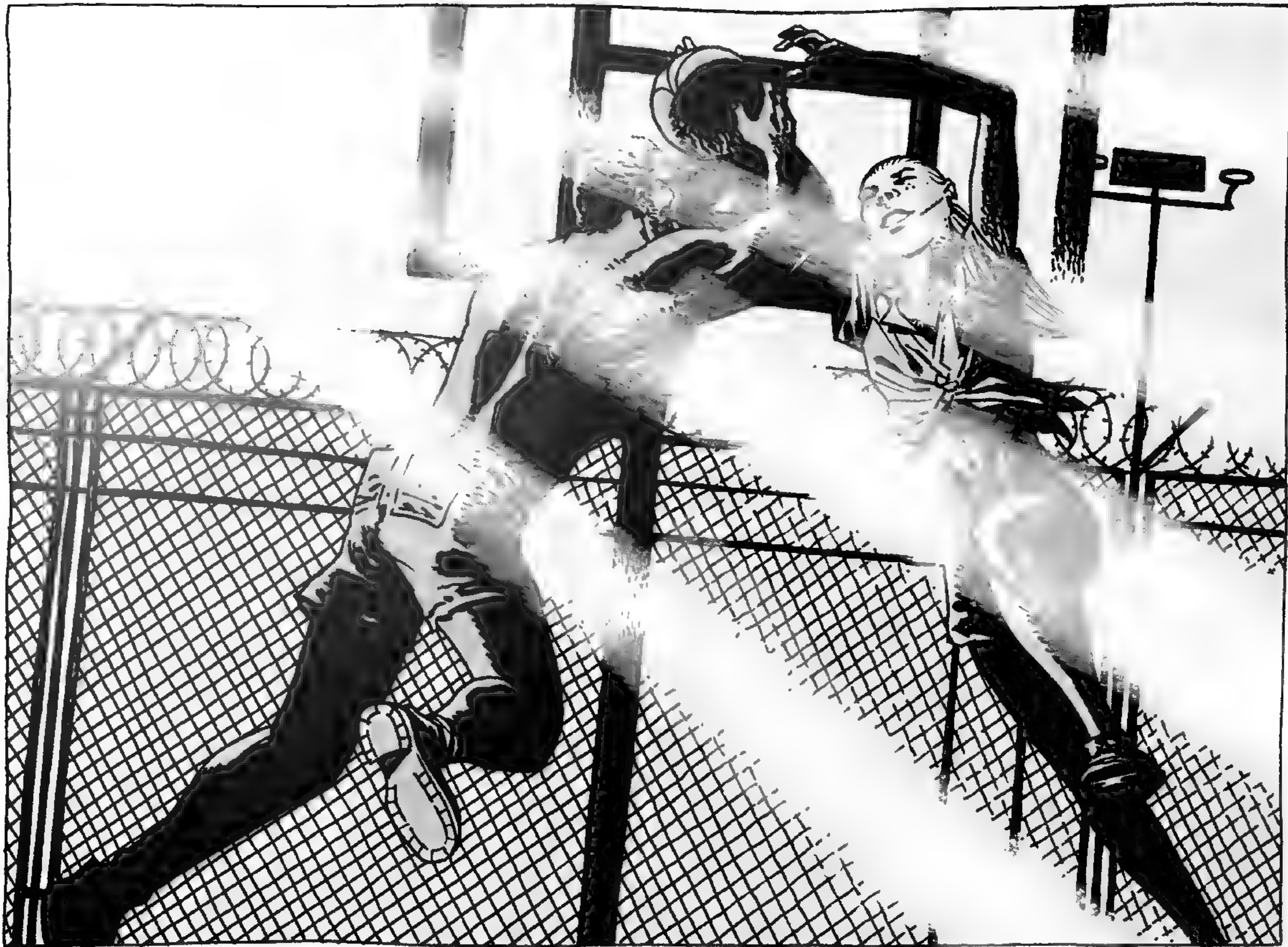
BUT YOU WOULD, RIGHT?

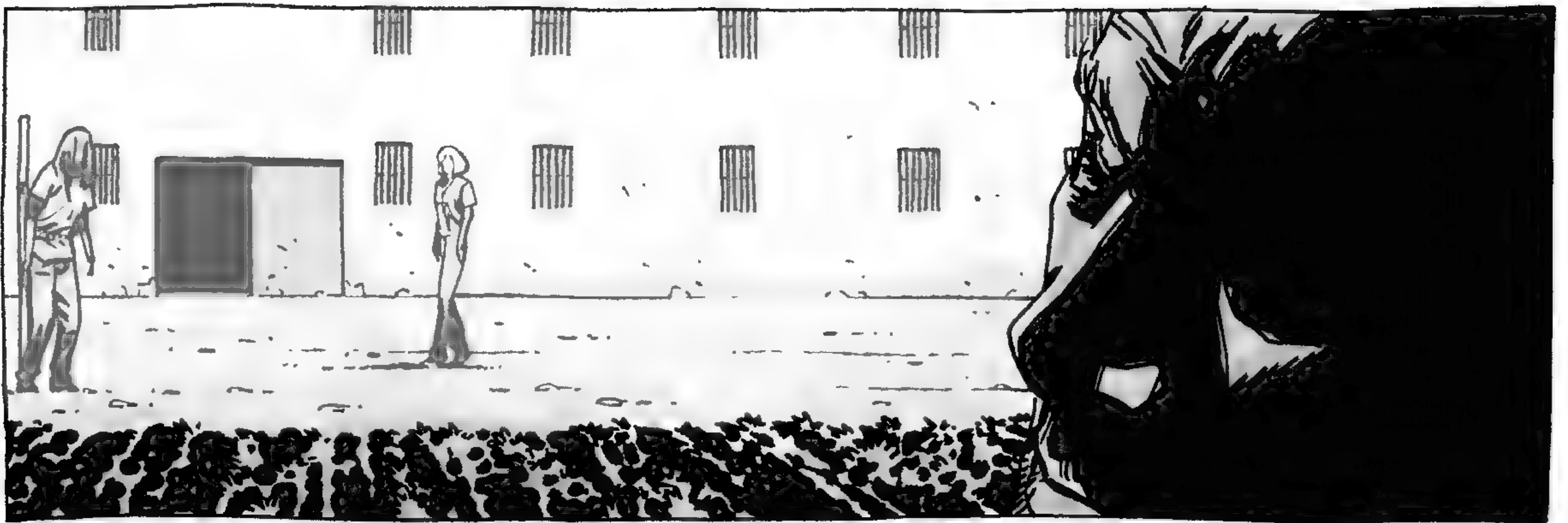












YOU'RE PROBABLY NOT GOING TO LIKE IT HERE, Y'KNOW.

THEY'RE NICE ENOUGH PEOPLE, AT FIRST THEY'RE GREAT... BUT THEY'RE SO GODDAMN JUDGMENTAL. ONE SLIP-UP... AND THAT'S IT FOR YOU. REALLY.

I TRIED TO KILL MYSELF. I DID. IT DIDN'T WORK, OBVIOUSLY, BUT I TRIED. THEY WON'T LET ME FORGET IT. SINCE THEN, I CAN SEE IT IN THEIR EYES-- THEY'VE LOST RESPECT FOR ME.

ALL OF THEM.

EVEN MY BEST FRIEND.



GAK.



SHE TRIES TO BE NICE BUT I CAN TELL SHE'S JUST PATRONIZING ME. SHE HASN'T WANTED TO TALK TO ME SINCE I DID IT. SHE JUST FEELS LIKE SHE HAS TO.

EVERYONE THINKS I'M CRAZY.



I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANYONE TO TALK TO, SO I FIGURED I'D INTRODUCE MYSELF. I'M CAROL.



I THINK I'LL JUST TALK TO YOU FROM NOW ON. YOU LISTEN, YOU DON'T SEEM TO JUDGE ME. THAT'S REALLY IMPORTANT IN A FRIENDSHIP, Y'KNOW. NOT JUDGING PEOPLE.

I REALLY HOPE YOU LIKE ME.



≡HUAKK!≡

OH,
GOOD...

YOU
DO LIKE
ME.



LETTER HACKS

WRITE TO US AT:

THE WALKING DEAD
C/O FUNK-O-TRON
P.O. BOX 54386
LEXINGTON, KY 40555-4386

OR

WALKINGDEAD@FUNKOTRON.COM

And here we are at issue 41. I'm preparing for San Diego, the big Comic-Con International and I'm trying to make sure this issue goes to the printer before I leave... so, y'know... no time for the chatty chat.

So let's dive into the letters!

Wee! (probably not all that appropriate after the end of this issue, but y'know, whatever).

Greetings Kirkland,
I've been keeping up with the walking dead since issue one, never read any of your other stuff. However as a 29 year old black male there are some concerns I have with your writing.... I'm concerned that you re going to let all these outside opinions about you being "Racist" affect the writing of the greatest zombie comic ever written. I'm proud of my black heritage, but I honestly felt that the events that happened to Michonne in issue 29 were not the result of a racist writer, but in actuality was the fucked up hand survivors get dealt in a world full of cut throats and zombies. I was horrified by what happened to homegirl in issue 29 but it only made the book a more intense read. (besides Rick is missing a hand, that's pretty brutal, too.) I consider your book an entertaining glimpse into a world of "Survival Horror" I don't relate to any of the characters any more or less because their race. I look at how well each character can adapt to the situations they are confronted with. I read the angry letters in issue 35 and although the whole "chocolate rape fantasy" accusations were funny, don't lose any sleep over it, man.

The Walking Dead is hands down the best zombie comic I've ever read. Please don't let your team get all soft over a few angry fans. You have the support and \$2.99 of this BLACK man every time I hit the comic shop.

One of your biggest and BLACKEST fans,

G. Washington

Thanks so much for the words of encouragement. I know I've said this many times over the last few letters columns, but again, there's no worry of me curbing my plans to appease the fan mail. I'm just doing what I want. It's what I've been doing since the beginning and the book is doing very well, so I don't have any plans to change the way I do things now.

Dear Robert,

My name is Martín Casanova, and I'm from Argentina. Before Marvel Zombies, I hadn't read anything from you, and that mini-series was a pleasant surprise. I don't think of myself as a zombie fan, but I loved "28 days later..." and "Shaun of the Dead".

I've been a comic book fan since 1989 (yeah, *that* Tim Burton movie...) and nowadays I have my own Buenos Aires based comic book company. It's just taking off, but we had 600 people at our last graphic novel presentation, and that's really promising, right?

Anyway, I just finished reading the first 33 issues of The Walking Dead *in two days* and I'm simply hooked. *I love it*. And reading it from a publisher point of view, I can't help but wonder "Why haven't I thought of this?". The book is a fun read, it's well written, and you never know what's coming next. It reminds me of the best Preacher issues. Oh, and the artwork is just amazing.

I think I'm three or four issues behind, but I don't know what it'll be like waiting 30 days to get the following chapter... While I read it, I thought it'd do a great live action series. If they let Nip/Tuck get away with all the gross operations...

Congratulations on a great book that is enjoyable anywhere in the world.

Best regards,
Martín Casanova

Glad you liked it, thanks for writing.

Dear Mr. Kirkman,

Well, first off let me start by giving a huge CONGRATS on joining the parenting world, I hope you both enjoy every up and down as much as I do.

Okay with that said...

I have decided to finally write once and for all....

I will begin with a little info about myself, I am a 28 year old single mother....

I became addicted to TWD since I came across the first issue, and I still am a huge fan, and although I am not some goth girl I have been horribly obsessed with zombies since I was a kid....actually I am in the middle of writing my own take on it....but that's another letter....I have to say yours has been one of my favorite storylines in this genre....with that said

I just wanted to point out that since the whole

brew-ha-ha over the Michonne ordeal and torture of the gov and all....

Well I have noticed almost if not every printed letter was written by a guy.....

That is true, I don't always read the names of the letter writers, so it's not something I notice unless it's in the body of the email. But yeah, it seems we've got a largely male fan base here on the book. I try to print all the letters from women just to try and even things out.

Now I am not some crazy bra burning man hating type of gal....

I just thought it might be a nice change to see what a woman thinks about it....

So here it goes....

I myself relate very personally with what Michonne went through in the comic....and to be honest I was hoping for more brutality against that douche bag.

I have read all sorts of things about this and yes it is probably a dead (no pun intended) subject but I just had to write...

Don't worry... the way things are going it may never die...

First off let's start by saying that if anyone thinks it was racist...well....that is utterly absurd.....mainly due to the fact that Michonne is the most bad ass out of all the women, and with that..... she was the only female character strong enough to pull through such an awful situation and fight back for herself...she actually epitomizes the term strong black woman....a lesser woman would have died.....or ratted out the others.... so let's just let that issue go shall we....if it is racist to have 3 of most interesting and strong characters be african-american....than I suppose I am confused about what racist means.

Second,rape yes is very ugly and scary and it is a million times worse in "real" life....and unfortunately it may happen to someone if one day zombies were to take over the world, and the living consequently were forced into a post-apocalyptic mad max survival type of world...but what is scarier is that it happens everyday...

Instead of writing nasty hate mail to the author of a fictional comic character maybe it would suit those people more to put their efforts and voices towards a different aspect of society that may deal with "real" people that were "really" raped....

The sad fact is that stuff goes on every single flipping day, and you don't see people getting all pissed off about it....and why?

Because they don't see it, it is just some far away idea....well I am so sorry that while you were reading your comic about the walking dead, with images of god knows how many different types of violence and gore, you were offended by the image of a woman being raped.....sorry to burst your bubble, and that you had to find out the world isn't a safe candy filled land with smiling unicorns and caramel filled chocolate trees..... welcome to the human fucking race and thanks for finally joining the group....oh and why not be a bit more creeped out about the people who were just a bit too eager to show how much they enjoyed that scene....

And to the persons who thought the torture was too brutal....ugh, the f*cker deserved way worse, and I wish it would have been the whole issue....but that is just me....

Maybe it would happen less in real life if someone was faced with getting horribly mutilated and tortured..... but who cares about that.... just continue on along ranting about a fictional world while the real one around you burns...but I suppose that now includes me and I am a hypocrite.....but at least I notice it and admit it.....and getting over the denial is the hardest part.

So here's to you Mr. Kirkman....keep writing intriguing storylines.....and shocking the shit out of people... it may be the only time they will ever recognize the world around them and not look away....

I will continue to buy your comics and be a huge fan.....I sure do hope you print this....although I doubt they will since it is so long....but hell if you cut out the profanities and most of the subject matter perhaps it will be more tolerable in print.....and it would just be freaking cool as hell to see my name in my favorite comic.....congrats again on the little one...

Sincerely,
Karith Cashion

Oh, we love long letters here at Letter Hack's central. And don't mind the profanity, we're all about that too. Thanks for taking the time to write.

YO Robert,

Chiming in late about the story with Michonne, I reserved judgment until the story concluded unlike many of these bleeding hearts who just immediately lashed out at you for your story then "dropped your book" (morons). A story with a STRONG BLACK WOMAN (god forbid) who came back from the bad place she was in and then kicked the ass of her attacker (Go Michonne). What did people expect from a HORROR comic, fuzzy bunnies and easter baskets?! Screw that! keep the F'D up stories coming Kirkman, that's what I at least expect from a HORROR comic with ADULT themes. Your doing a kick ass job considering the number of titles you write every month. Until the Aliens show up a hundred issues from now MAKE. MINE. KIRKMAN. Invincible, Walking Dead, Ultimate X-Men! What am I missing? I know you're writing more.

Matt McIntyre

Irredeemable Ant-Man (for a few more issues at least), Marvel Zombies, The Astounding Wolf-Man and a few things that are yet to be announced. I like to keep busy.

Man... I hope things go back to normal with the mail soon. I really, REALLY appreciate the support but it does start to feel like I'm getting the same letter over and over.

Dear TWD,
I have to start by saying that this comic has completely amazed me. I've never been into comics let alone collecting them but since I started reading TWD I've done little else. What originally attracted me to this comic was Tony Moore, I've been a big fan of his in

the last year or so and had slowly started checking into comics he was involved with when I discovered TWD. Since I bought my first issue about three months ago I haven't stopped purchasing anything with its title attached to it. I want to let everyone involved with this comic know that it is pure perfection from start to finish, with a captivating story that keeps you on the edge of your seat every issue to the amazing illustrations. I would also like you to know that I love the letter hacks, I do, in fact, read each and everyone. The questions that your fans write in about are great most of the time and I love the fact that you take the time to write responses. Thank you Mr. Kirkman and everyone else involved with the creation and or printing of this amazing story.

Your appreciative fan
Josh Hart

Well, sir, thanks so much for the far-to-kind words. It's always good to hear about people picking up the book and really liking it. It's good to know there are some people here to replace all the people who are quitting the book due to all the violence and racism.

As a employee of Wal-mart, laughed my butt off when they got busted looting Wa-mart!!!!Thanks for the book!!!!!!!!!!!!

Bobby W. Chamberlain

Hey--I used to work at Wal-Mart, too! We can be Wal-Mart buddies! I mean, ahem--we can be Wal-Mart buddies!!!!!!!! (better?)

Hey

I've been itching to write a letter to you for some time but I've never really had too much to say other than praise/questions and where would that get us ...nowhere.

I try to read the letter columns as much as possible (I might pick up something I didn't already know). Then I read in geek how much of your time it eats up .

I wanted to say I love the columns 38 was awesome due to the numb skull talking about T&A and Religion (funny stuff). Anyways I thought I would tell you I think you're a lucky bastard to go from reading comics, to working at a store, to doing your thing with Funk-O-Tron, Image, and now working for marvel in such a short time (dream come true, right?). What's marvel got you slated for next ?

A few things, but nothing I can talk about right now. It really is a dream come true. I mean, this is what I wanted to do as a kid and I'm doing it and making a decent living at it. It just doesn't get any better than this. I'm very content. And as far as the letters columns go, I do like doing them, but they are a bit of a pain in the ass, they take a bunch of time.

Have you ever seen a move about the rapture from the 70's or 80's involving tattoos of the mark of the beast and it ending were the believers were cast out of the community and died of starvation? Total ridiculous and from my childhood but I can't find anything about it (like a name) it never hurts to ask right?

Envied by,
Ed Kelsey

Hm, I don't know what movie that is... but I'm interested. Can anyone else help us out? Please?

P.S. How big of a bite did you swallow to reprint 35?

Well, quite a big one. It took my cut of the profits from 35 and part of 36 to cover the printing bill on the corrected version of 35. It's my own damn fault though... I should have looked at those proofs. It kills me that it's the only time in the history of me doing comics that I've forgotten to look over the proofs... and a page got duplicated. I mean--what are the odds. So I basically wrote 35 for free and wrote 36 at a discount. But really, it was worth it to not have to put up with a misprinted book being out there. And the messed up issue 35 repeated page 21 where 22 should have been... so there was no cliffhanger, the whole ending was blown. There was no way I could let that go out.

Live and learn.

Robert Kirkman!

Just finished #38, Letter Hacks and all. It made me come and piss and shit myself, all at the same time, while still keeping the comic in near mint condition (9.2). So two weeks until #39, huh? I'll believe it when I see it. But it's always worth the wait. In #38, what's up with the old long haired fella's overuse of the phrase, "You follow me?" Perhaps he's overused it before, and I just hadn't noticed.

Maybe Axel says more than usual in 38 but he says that after almost every line of dialogue he's ever spoken. It's a personality tick, something he's done for as long as he's been in the book. Check back, you'll see.

Race was a big issue in #38's Hacks. I guess it's a big issue anywhere. Would you allow me to comment on the subject?

At least you asked first... I'm a bit sick of the subject, but go ahead.

If so, here's my comment!

As I understand big boy capital "S" Science, everyone is ultimately descended from folk who came from Africa. Google that shit if you don't believe me, each and every human being on this planet comes from one black man and one black woman. Different skin color, different hair color, stuff termed "racial characteristics" by one ass or another, is the result of evolution, human beings adapting to different climates and environments, and shit. That's why the mole-men are so pale and have such big eyes.

My creationist background argues a bit with your theory... and I've seen some paintings of Adam and Eve... and heck for that matter Jesus himself that go against your argument. **joking**

So we're all the same race, is basically what Science has uncovered here. Everything else is just cultural, different cultures conflicting for whatever reasons different cultures conflict. And that shit could be dealt with, so easy. Does the problem lie with the unwashed masses or the washed controllers of the masses? In the end, both master and slave castes, each and every one of us that is, are all trapped in some perverse geo-social realpolitik gangbang, forced to service an invisible partner who welds an iron three-pronged prick. That's what I think, anyway.

Wow... the discussion kinda ramped up there for a bit, eh?

What's with not using thought balloons or captions? Cinematic effect? I wonder how many people besides me had no idea it was June, 2004, TWD time, until you said it in a response to an email. I'm not saying you should denote the passage of time → having the characters and the readers unaware of exactly how much time has passed makes both groups disoriented and contributes to the suspense. But it is nice to have a frame of reference, I'm glad you let us in on that shit.

Well, it's not really important to the story and I really don't keep too close of an eye on it. So a running tally would just be a pain in my ass to keep track of.

You said you'd hook up anybody with a proper copy for the #35 misprint variant. Howsabout hookin' me up with the misprint in exchange for the regular one? And www.mycomicshop.com totally rules. Word.

I've only got like two or three of them myself... sorry. I've got none to spare.

Godboy Andrew J. Shaw wondered why no God in TWD. In my humblest opinion, I think after a zombie apocalypse, most everyone would wise up real quick to what's really going down with the whole bearded dude in the sky thing. It is my contention that one should not pander to the religious set anymore than one should pander to the people with what should be considered cultural hang-ups.

Aside from my more than likely inappropriate joke earlier I really don't want to get into a huge religious debate. Living in Kentucky some of my closest friends are religious and I believe their faith would very much survive this type of situation. And there's nothing wrong with that. I believe that was touched on a bit in this very issue.

Presumptuousness Dept.: If you like Nick Cave you should check out Will Oldham's Bonnie Prince Billie stuff; you've probably heard it already but if you haven't, there you go. "I See A Darkness" is the best, I think. Do you watch any soap operas? "As the World Turns" is fun stuff.

Only "Passions" whenever I catch it on TV... that shit is INSANE!

Alright, man, Letter Hacks rules, the comic rules, everything totally rules.

Rev. Occulto

Thanks for writing.

Dear Robert (Bohab) Kirkman,

This comic is the sweetness. I had never picked up a comic in my 20 years until I happened to see that there was a George Ramono'ish zombie comic book out and that it was freaking awesome. Since then I have indulged in many different comics and have opened up to many different genre's of comic book. I have bought every single issue and trade and have both hardbound copies out because I want to see this book go beyond its 100th issue (which should be an extra spectacular double sized anniversary issue). But I got a favor to ask... please put me in one of the issues letter sections! Just a name in some random spot. It would be sweet to see my name in the comic book that got me into to comic books. Oh Yeah, and those people that say you're too edgy with your work and that you are racist... they're scared because they would be the first

to go in the zombie holocaust.

Your fan till the apocalypse,
Matthew Barker

Consider your request honored. Call my silly, but I kinda like the idea of The Walking Dead not really having anniversary issues per se. Issue 25 was a major turning point but not double-sized or special in any other way. Issue 50 will be the same way. Maybe... MAYBE when we make it to 100 we'll go all out... but really, I'm kinda against it at this point.

Dear Robert Kirkman

I have been reading the walking dead since it started (i forgot how many years ago).

Four years this October. Yes, we will have done 43 issues in 4 years. So we missed 5 months... in FOUR YEARS. Not bad for an independent comic... and I really honestly think that may be the best record for an independent comic out there... most definitely way up there.

I am a big zombie fan I read your marvel zombies collection and I thought that was a masterpiece man. You were my inspiration for my play Not Another Zombie Outbreak (I am only 16 years old). It was a smash hit at my school and it won an award for best One act play. You are the man with the plan when it comes to Zombies dude. I will follow you until you stop writing the Walking Dead (I'm not trying to sound like a stalker). also keep writing for Marvel, you add that little spice to them I haven't seen in a while. Keep up the good work and I hope you are honored that you are my inspiration.

Your fanboy
Zack Lippy aka Farmer Joe

I am so honored that I have inspired... Zippy Lippy, aka Farmer Joe.

Dear Captain Kirkman,

One of these issues, when someone shoots at a zombie, it's gonna turn out to be some dude with a hangover walking funny; I would love to see that!

So you're really an atheist, huh... or was that a Pagan? Sorry, I always get those two confused. I don't think it'll stop me reading your books, well except one... the one that got canceled. I actually thought that 'Irredeemable' was just hitting it's stride! But any way you sugar coat it: it's still Ant-Man, so. Everyone knows that Kirkman should be writing Spider-Man or the Incredible Hulk or Wolverine Origins anyway, right?

You're starting to win me over... but really, there's a huge difference between Pagans and Atheists, you should do some research, my friend.

I am getting to know the characters names a bit more now, after over a year of consecutive reading or so. I guess I can understand the whole Gilligan's Island/ Scooby-Doo approach of not using last names, especially with such a large cast; just make sure you use the first names a bit more.

I'll do my best, Andrew.

Had a letter printed in issue #38; you didn't bother to tell me...us...how a zombie is created, just that it's not

through biting. Are we ever gonna discover why some people were affected by the.zombification, and others not?

Sincerely,
Andrew J. Shaw

I don't really remember showing anyone who isn't affected by the zombification. Basically, the rule is: WHATEVER it is that causes the zombies, is something everyone already has. If you stub your toe, get an infection and die... you turn into a zombie. UNLESS your brain is damaged. If someone shoots you in the head and you die... you're dead. A zombie bite kills you because of infection, or blood loss... not because of the zombie "virus." Make sense?

And please (I worry that the next six letters columns will be about religion) don't take the Atheist thing too harshly. I've got nothing against religion, I think it's swell, I just personally don't buy it. I try to display a fair portrayal of it in the book... and I'll probably delve a little deeper into it with coming issues.

Hey Robert Kirkman!

Egads! I've been found!

I would like to take this time to respond to Mr. John W who's letter made print in issue # 37 of TWD, found the zombie on the top of page 2 in TWD #35 a little conspicuous.

Yup. It's me. Charlie was gracious enough to help me with my little campaign to become "a glorified comic book extra". A most awesome moment appearing in a most awesome book. Thanks again.

And Robert, this isn't the first time I've snuck my way into your books. I'd like to draw your attention to page 2 in Invincible #37. Ah HA! "One please".

Hopefully, plans are I'll be making it into another of your books creating a "Kirkman Trifecta!".

I hope all the books I buy get your child through college. Thanks for making comics a great hobby, and Charlie, thanks for making me a part of that hobby.

Sincerely,
Jeff J

Yeah, sure man... that zombie is you. Likely story. You're going to get everyone and their brother emailing Charlie to ask him to draw them in the book--and that's no good. Shame on you Jeff J... SHAME!

Sir,

Please feel free to skip this first bit, it's nothing but the usual: love The Walking Dead, excellent job, first time writing to a comic, keep it up!

I'm only going to say one thing about the continual controversy over the Michonne rape that has really been done to death, and that is that I think it's a positive thing that a comic can generate such discourse. Genuine reader reaction and debate over issues highlighted is always good to see, so I'd take it as a generally positive thing.

I really do. I know I've been complaining a bit

about it in the letters column as of late (mostly in jest) but I do think it's great that people care deeply enough to write in, whether it be positive or negative.

Anyhow, on to the real reasons for writing. I've been a huge fan of the series for a while now, however reading Issue 38 I was suddenly struck by two things:

Rick knows that the child isn't his. Now this in itself isn't a huge revelation, but it was that I cared; and I suddenly realized that you've managed to trick me into watching some zombie apocalyptic version of Eastenders (a British soap if it's not know over there, which I hope it isn't). I don't know if that's a good thing or not, but for once I find myself caring about such things in a plot, which is disturbing in itself. I suppose it does also mean I'd start watching Eastenders too if they worked in a zombie outbreak at some point, but then when wouldn't a film or TV show be drastically improved by the addition of zombies to some extent?

I agree. Sorry to slip in a bit of soap opera... but really, aren't all comics just soap operas for boys. It's all about relationships and human interaction if you look past the explosions, fighting and zombies... just admit it. "Oh, man... I sure do hope Peter and Mary Jane kiss this issue!" We're all girls.

Secondly, a slight grumble, sorry. Towards the end of the issue I found myself thinking "Oh, we're running out of pages, must be a cliffhanger soon. In the supermarket near Woodbury, I know a bunch of Woodbury guys will turn up." Unsurprisingly, over the page the same happens. Obviously I know why you employ such devices at the end of each issue, and I'm sure it makes a lot of sense. I just on occasion find them a little stilted; especially when they are quickly resolved and everything is 'reset' to default afterwards. Regardless, a very minor point on what is by far the best comic book going. It's not as if I expect you to stop doing it. I don't know, I just felt the need to point it out for some reason.

Well the intent is for them to not be stilted and I try not to quickly reset to default afterwards... I'll try to work harder at it. I think the "cliffhangers for the last few issues have been a bit of a change of pace... and I hope the one at the end of this issue came as at least a SMALL shock.

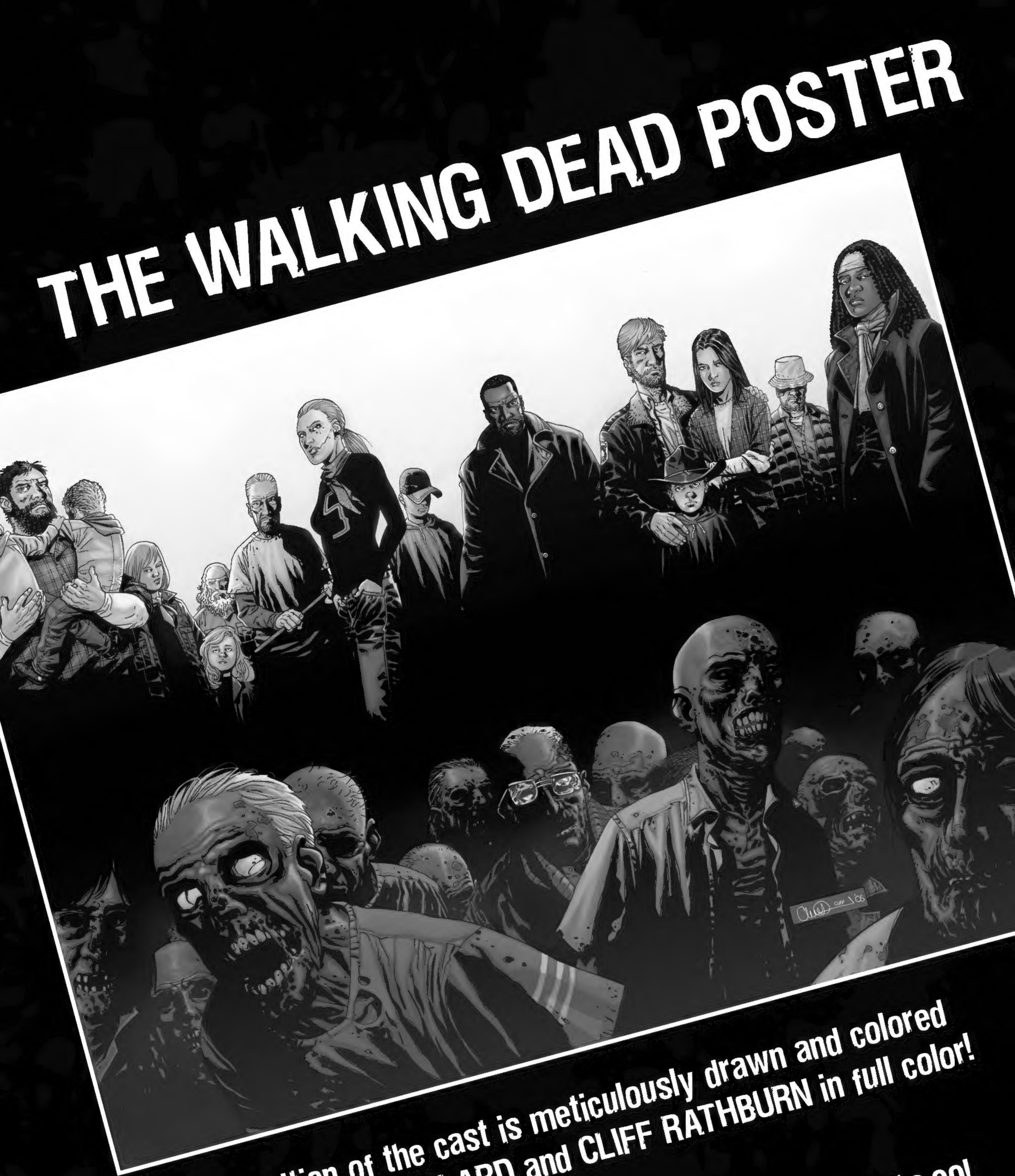
Anyway, keep up the excellent work. It is genuinely refreshing to have such an original, thrilling and intelligent work in any medium, but especially comics. Don't ever let the series stop.

Yours Sincerely,
Paul Hunting

I'll do my best to keep it up, as will Mistrs Adlard, Rathburn and Wooton. The best is yet to come!

And with that, I gotta wrap things up. The wife and I gotta watch Sex and the City dvds. (Research for an upcoming arc.)

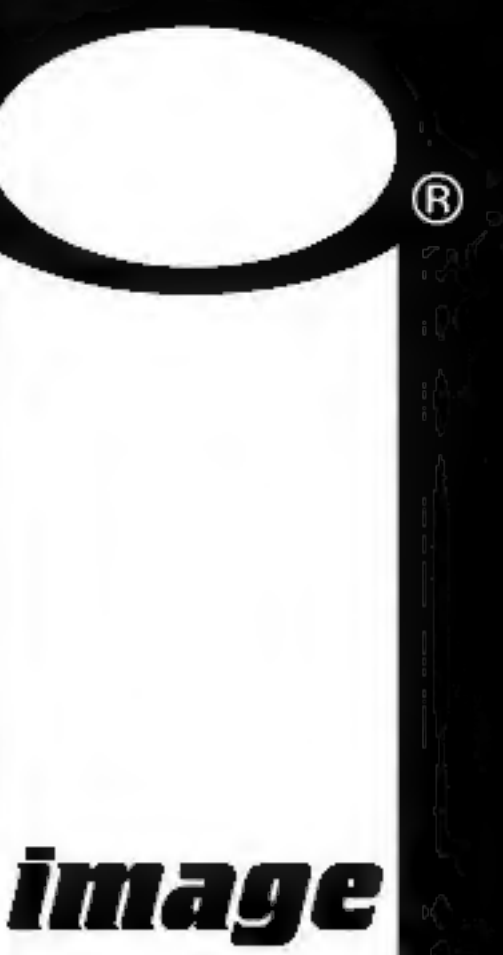
-Robert Kirkman



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